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The Incarnation of the Lord

The Incarnation of the Lord

A SERIES OF SERMONS

TRACING THE UNFOLDING OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

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TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

HENRY CODMAN POTTER,

D.D. (OXON.), LL.D. (CANTAB.),

BISHOP OF NEW YORK,

TRUE FRIEND,

MAN OF GOD, WITHOUT FEAR AND WITHOUT REPROACH,

FATHER IN GOD, STRONG, WISE, AND GOOD,

THIS BOOK

IS DEDICATED IN FIDELITY AND LOVE.

PREFACE

TWO years ago, at the request of the Rector, the Rev. Henry Mottet, D.D., a series of six sermons on the Incarnation were delivered by the author in the Church of the Holy Communion, New York. Many of the clergy as well as laymen who heard them, and others who heard of them, urged me to publish them as soon as practicable; because, as they represented, they satisfied in some measure the demand for instruction on the burning question of the incarnation of our Lord. I declined to publish at the time, because the series was not sufficiently complete to satisfy me.

The sermons delivered at that time were those numbered III., V., VI., VII., IX., X. I saw that four others were necessary, which I could not then prepare. Soon after, the fourth sermon was prepared and delivered in Trinity Church, Pittsburg, and in St. Bartholomew's, New York. Last Advent the eighth sermon was prepared and given in St. Paul's, Rome, Italy. Sermons I.

and II. were prepared a few weeks ago. The former was delivered in the Church of the Messiah, Brooklyn, on Palm Sunday last; the latter in Adams Chapel of the Union Theological Seminary, soon afterwards. Having at last completed the course, the call for publication could no longer be postponed.

There are many able and valuable works on the Incarnation before the public; but these deal chiefly with the historical, dogmatic, or ecclesiastical sides of the question. The purpose of this course of sermons is to give the Biblical side, and to trace the development of the doctrine in the New Testament. This limitation is not due to any lack of appreciation of the doctrine as defined by the Church after a long and sharp conflict with errors in various forms, or of the modern discussions which have originated out of the necessities of our age; but it is simply due to the fact that I have been called more especially to study the Biblical doctrine in accordance with modern Biblical methods, and therefore to a deeper knowledge of the Biblical doctrine than I have learned from others, and a clearer understanding of the origin and growth of the doctrine in the New Testament times. Within these limits the sermons, while they contain noth-

ing contrary to Catholic doctrine, yet give the Biblical supports of that doctrine in those new relations and new lights which modern Biblical science furnishes.

The sermons, however, do not confine themselves to the field of Biblical theology; but, in addition to the express teaching of the passages of Holy Scripture, logical and practical expositions are given, and the whole is set in the religious environment of the apostolic times.

The method of the sermon does not admit of much discussion of the views of others, or of other interpretations of passages of Holy Scripture than those adopted by the preacher. It was deemed unwise to use any more footnotes than were necessary to give the texts used and references of importance to the author's line of thought. He refers frequently to his own books, "Messianic Prophecy," "The Messiah of the Gospels," "The Messiah of the Apostles," and "General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture," in which he has discussed many questions in debate with sufficient fulness.

With these explanations this book is now given to the public, in the trust that it may remove difficulties, overcome objections, and resolve doubts, due to the intricate and comprehensive

problems involved in so great a theme, and lead many to a firmer faith in the incarnation of our Lord, and to a higher apprehension of what it means to us in our personal relations to our Saviour, and to the Church, and to mankind.

April 28, 1902.

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	The Son of Man from Heaven	1
II.	The Son of the Father	31
III.	Born of a Woman under the Law	61
IV.	The Self-impoverishment of the Lord	81
V.	The Kenosis	105
VI.	The Epiphany of Our Saviour	125
VII.	Made Like unto His Brethren	145
VIII.	The Advent of God	167
IX.	The Word made Flesh	189
X.	Born of the Virgin	213

Indexes 237

I

THE SON OF MAN FROM HEAVEN

I

THE SON OF MAN FROM HEAVEN

But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. — MARK ii. 10, 11; MATT. ix. 6; LUKE v. 24.

THESE words of Jesus were spoken in a private house in Capernaum, which was crowded to the doors with people eager to listen to his teaching. Among them were Pharisee doctors of the Law from Jerusalem. Some of his friends brought a paralytic to Jesus to be healed. Although, as St. Luke tells us, "the power of the Lord was with him to heal," he did not put forth that power at once. But instead of healing the paralytic, he said to him, "Son, thy sins are forgiven." The Pharisee doctors exclaimed at these words as blasphemous. "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" Jesus at once meets their charge of blasphemy by the assertion that the Son of Man had authority to forgive sins; and he couples his authority to forgive sins with his power of healing, as both alike endow-

ments for his ministry on earth as the Son of Man.

This was the first occasion[1] on which Jesus used the term *Son of Man*, but he used it from thenceforth as his characteristic title of himself. It is evident that he uses it in a Messianic sense; that is, in the sense that had already become characteristic of this term in the Old Testament Scriptures and in the Jewish opinion of his times. His words could have had no propriety in answer to the charge of the Pharisees, that he was blaspheming, unless he had an authority which was unique, which was special to himself as a person in a peculiar nearness to God. The doctors of the Law were certainly correct in their exclamation, "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" for no one but God had ever before forgiven sins. The forgiveness of sins in the Law and the Prophets is reserved to God alone; and there is no prediction in Biblical prophecy with reference to any of the Messianic characters, whether king or prophet, priest or Son of Man, that any one of these would ever

[1] This is evident in the order of events in the Synoptists Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The words John i. 51, iii. 13, 14, are earlier in the order of that Gospel, but this order is not, in my opinion, a chronological, but a topical order.

exercise this prerogative of God. Jesus is claiming for himself as the Son of Man a greater authority than any hitherto known, even in the most sublime ideals of the Messianic future. The dilemma is unavoidable. Either he was a blasphemer, or he was nearer to God than any historic person, or than any ideal person of the prophetic Scriptures, and therefore had a unique authority exalting him above all other known persons but God.

The term *Son of Man* is doubtless a Semitic phrase, a term of relation, emphasizing the characteristic, which in this case is mankind or humanity. Sometimes it indicates man as mortal in antithesis to God and angels, as in the address of God or the angel to Ezekiel,[1] the prophet; sometimes, as in the eighth Psalm,[2] the ideal man, or humanity as such, as created a little lower than the heavenly beings in dignity, and yet made lord of all other creatures.

But in the prediction in the seventh chapter of Daniel[3] the Son of Man is contrasted with the four Wild Beasts, and stands for the kingdom of God over against the four successive empires of

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[1] Ezek. ii. 1, iii. 1, iv. 1, etc.

[2] Psalms viii. 4–6.

[3] Dan. vii. 13.

the world, whether we think of a reference to ideal Israel in contrast to these empires, or to an ideal person at the head of Israel over against the king, Antiochus, or the little horn of the last of the Wild Beasts of the prophecy. There can be no reasonable doubt that the seventh chapter of Daniel originated the Messianic ideal of the Son of Man, the ideal redeemer and judge of ideal Israel. The only difference of opinion that was tenable for the time of Jesus was, whether the passage was generic, referring to Israel, or personal, referring to the Messianic head of Israel.

In the Similitudes of the Book of Enoch, written probably two or three generations before the birth of our Lord (94–64 B.C.),[1] the Son of Man of Daniel is certainly interpreted as a person; and the statements of Daniel, that the Son of Man was to come with the clouds of heaven in order to take possession of the kingdom and rule forever over all nations after the judgment upon his enemies[2] are enlarged so as to identify this Son of Man with the chosen Servant of the Second Isaiah, and to represent him as the Elect One who was concealed in heaven and named before the creation of the sun and the stars; thus

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[1] Messiah of the Gospels, p. 23. [2] Dan. vii. 14.

as pre-existing in heaven with God prior to all creatures, before he descends upon the clouds to the judgment of mankind, for the redemption of Israel and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom.

1. It is evident that Jesus uses the term *Son of Man* with reference to this prediction of Daniel, and also with the same interpretation of the Son of Man as a person that is given in the Similitudes of Enoch; and that he represents himself as that Son of Man. It cannot be doubted that this is the case in his great prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and the End of the Age.[1] For he not only uses the term *Son of Man* of Daniel with reference to himself, but also the term *abomination of desolation* of the same Daniel,[2] and also the very language of Daniel, where he says: "Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory."[3] In other words he predicts that he will come again in the clouds as the Son of Man of Daniel to judge the world and set up the everlasting kingdom.

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[1] Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 135 *seq.*

[2] Dan. ix. 27, xi. 31, xii. 1.

[3] Mark xiii. 26; Matt. xxiv. 30; Luke xxi. 27.

But this prediction is only one of a large number of similar ones in the Gospels, in which Jesus enlarges upon the conception of the second advent on the clouds. A very large proportion of these come from the Logia of St. Matthew, that large collection of the Wisdom of Jesus that St. Matthew issued in the Hebrew language, and in the measures of Hebrew Wisdom, before any of our present Gospels were composed, and which was used by all the Synoptists. Another large number come from the Gospel of St. Mark, the earliest of the four Gospels, written under the influence of St. Peter. But each of the Gospels has additional passages, all indicating the fundamental importance of this term in the usage of Jesus; all the more that, with the exception of a very few passages and some of these dubious, the term *Son of Man* is used only in passages from the lips of Jesus himself.

These words of Jesus are from the Logia:

(1) "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels,
And they shall gather out of his kingdom
All things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity,
And shall cast them into the furnace of fire." [1]

[1] Matt. xiii. 41.

(2) "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words,
Of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed,
When he cometh in the glory of the Father with his angels."[1]

I

(3) "If they say: Behold he is in the wilderness, go not forth.
If they say: Behold he is in the inner chambers, believe it not;
For as the lightning when it lighteneth
Shineth out of one part under heaven unto the other part under heaven,
So shall be the coming of the Son of Man."

II

"As it came to pass in the days of Noah,
They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage,
Until the day that Noah entered into the ark,
And the flood came and destroyed them all.
So shall be the coming of the Son of Man."

III

"As it came to pass in the days of Lot;
They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold,

[1] Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26; cf. Matt. x. 33; Luke xii. 9. In this case and in those that follow an effort has been made to find the original words of Jesus at the basis of the several texts.

But in the day that Lot went out from Sodom
He rained from heaven and destroyed them all:
So shall be the coming of the Son of Man."[1]

(4) "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him,
Then shall he sit on the throne of his glory:
And before him will be gathered all the nations:
And he shall separate them one from another
As the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats;
And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left."[2]

We may add, from the Gospel of St. Mark, the following: Jesus said to the high-priest before the Sanhedrim, in reply to his question, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" — "I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven."[3]

According to St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus said to the Twelve: "In the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory,

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[1] Matt. xxiv. 37–39; Luke xvii. 26–30; cf. Matt. xxiv. 44. The original form of these logia differs slightly from the several versions given in the Gospels. The laws that govern the forms of Hebrew Wisdom enable us to determine it. See General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture, pp. 385 *seq.*

[2] Matt. xxv. 31–33.

[3] Mark xiv. 62; Matt. xxvi. 64; Luke xxii. 69.

ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[1]

According to St. Luke, Jesus said: "Howbeit when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"[2]

According to St. John, he said to Nathanael: "Ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."[3]

From these passages it is evident that Jesus regards himself as the Son of Man from heaven of Daniel, and that he refers his coming on the clouds to his second advent, when he will come in glory with the holy angels to execute judgment upon mankind, to redeem the faithful, and set up an everlasting kingdom of glory.

On this sure basis we are now prepared to consider the many other passages in which Jesus speaks of himself as the Son of Man in his work prior to his second advent.

2. Jesus speaks of a coming of the Son of Man at a much earlier time and in different terms from his second advent on the clouds. Thus, in a passage from the Logia, he says to the Twelve, with reference to their preaching:

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[1] Matt. xix. 28.

[2] Luke xviii. 8.

[3] John i. 51.

"Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel,
Till the Son of Man be come."[1]

On another occasion he said:

"There be some standing here which shall in no wise taste death
Till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."[2]

This is an advent to establish his kingdom of redemption, which may be referred to the Pentecostal theophany, as distinguished from the second advent to judge the world and establish the everlasting kingdom of glory. In such passages Jesus evidently uses Son of Man as a term cognate with the Messianic King. It is in entire accord with this that, at the institution of the Lord's Supper, he seems to anticipate the establishment of his kingdom ere another Passover.[3] There is no sufficient reason to suppose that Jesus confounds his future advent to set up his kingdom with his future advent to judgment and the erection of the kingdom of glory; for in the Parable of the Sower, the Son of Man is represented as sowing the good seed,[4] where the sowing at the beginning is distin-

[1] Matt. x. 23.

[2] Matt. xvi. 28, cf. Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27.

[3] Messiah of the Gospels, p. 124. [4] Matt. xiii. 37.

guished from the harvest of judgment at the end: and in the Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly[1] the several stages in the history of the kingdom are represented between sowing and reaping: and Jesus constantly distinguished in conception between entrance into the kingdom of grace by a childlike faith and regeneration by the water and the Spirit, from entrance into the kingdom of glory, which is always preceded by an act of Messianic judgment.

3. Jesus frequently uses the term *Son of Man* of himself in his foreboding of his passion and prediction of his resurrection. Thus in the Logia:

> "For even as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites,
> So shall the Son of Man be to this generation."[2]

This is thus interpreted by St. Matthew: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."[3] In other words the death and resurrection of the Son of Man is to be the same sort of a sign to his generation that the preaching of Jonah after his resurrection from the belly of

[1] Mark iv. 26–29; Messiah of the Gospels, p. 90.
[2] Luke xi. 30. [3] Matt. xii. 40.

the fish was to the Ninevites. That is essentially to say, that the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was the great sign to convince and convert his generation to him and his kingdom.

Jesus also said on another occasion:

"Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them,
And their great ones exercise authority over them.
Not so shall it be among you:
But whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister;
And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant:
Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,
And to give his life a ransom for many."[1]

In these words Jesus identifies himself as the Son of Man with the interposing Servant of the Second Isaiah, just as in the Similitudes of the Book of Enoch.[2]

So the Gospel of Mark gives several predictions by Jesus of his death and resurrection.[3]

Jesus regards his passion as the Son of Man

[1] Mark x. 42–45; Matt. xx. 25–28.

[2] Messiah of the Gospels, p. 24.

[3] Mark viii. 31, ix. 9, 12, 31, x. 33, 34, xiv. 41; cf. Matt. xvi. 21, xvii. 9, 12, 22, 23, xx. 18, 19, xxvi. 2, 45; Luke ix. 22, 44, xviii. 31–33, xxiv. 7.

to be a fulfilment of the predictions of the Old Testament.

"The Son of Man goeth, even as it is written of him: But woe unto that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed!"[1]

The reference to written Scripture as fulfilled in his death and resurrection can be no other than to the suffering Servant of the Second Isaiah.

The Gospel of John adds to the teaching of Jesus of the Synoptists several other sayings:

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."[2] "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he."[3] "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. . . . And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."[4]

The people in astonishment exclaim: "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up? who is this Son of Man?"[5] In a later passage Jesus says: "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified

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[1] Mark xiv. 21; Matt. xxvi. 24; Luke xxii. 22.
[2] John iii. 14.
[3] John viii. 28.
[4] John xii. 23, 32.
[5] John xii. 34.

in him; and God shall glorify him in himself, and straightway shall he glorify him."[1]

These passages comprehend under the term *lifted up* not only his lifting up on the cross, but also and still more his lifting up through his death to his throne of glory whence he exerts ever his attracting power, drawing all men to himself. Just as in the Synoptists the death and resurrection are always combined, and just as the sign of Jonah is the sign to his generation according to the Synoptists' report, so according to the report of St. John the lifting up of the Son of Man is in order that all may know him to be the one he claimed to be.

4. Jesus also represents himself to be the Son of Man during his ministry on earth prior to his passion. So in a passage from the Logia: Jesus said to a man who would follow him about as a disciple in his ministry:

"The foxes have holes,
And the birds of the heaven have nests;
But the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."[2]

This Jesus did not speak, as some have supposed, because of his humility as a poor man, but in order to show his would-be disciple that

[1] John xiii. 31–32. [2] Matt. viii. 20; Luke ix. 58.

his ministry, and that of his closest followers, was a ministry of voluntary poverty.

On another occasion Jesus shows the inconsistency of the people by putting in antithesis his simple social life with the austerity and asceticism of John the Baptist.

"For John came neither eating nor drinking,
And they say, he hath a demon.
The Son of Man came eating and drinking,
And they say, Behold, a gluttonous man,
And a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!"[1]

John the Baptist, according to Jesus, was a prophet, the last and highest of the Old Testament prophets. He is here contrasting his own prophetic methods with those of John.

In his justification of his disciples for plucking ears of grain to satisfy their hunger on the Sabbath, over against the traditional interpretation of the Sabbath law, Jesus said:

"The Sabbath was made for man,
And not man for the Sabbath.
The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."[2]

This is not that the Son of Man, as man, is Lord of the Sabbath; but that the Son of Man has

[1] Matt. xi. 18, 19; Luke vii. 33, 34.

[2] Mark ii. 27, 28; Matt. xii. 8; Luke vi. 5.

such an authority in himself that he may determine all questions as to the Sabbath over against the teachings of the Pharisee doctors of the Law.

In response to the charge of the Pharisees that he wrought his miracles by the power of the devil, after showing how absurd it was to think of the devil casting out devils, he warned them:

I

"All their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men,
And their blasphemies wherewith soever they blaspheme:
But whosoever shall blaspheme against the Spirit shall not be forgiven."

II

"And whosoever shall speak against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven *him*;
But whosoever shall speak against the Spirit, it shall not be forgiven *him*,
Neither in this age nor in that which is to come."[1]

It is evident that Jesus here separates himself from all men as the object of misrepresentation and blasphemy in order to make an antithesis between himself and the divine Spirit, implying thereby such a unique authority that resistance

[1] Mark iii. 28, 29; Matt. xii. 31, 32; Luke xii. 10.

to it might be conceived as unpardonable, did he not himself represent it as pardonable, notwithstanding it was more guilty than any resistance to the authority of man. When this is placed alongside of the woes upon Chorazin and Bethsaida for rejecting his Gospel,[1] we may understand the uniqueness of his claim to authority even here.

From St. Luke's Gospel we have two important passages. The first is given in connection with the conversion of Zacchæus, the publican, where Jesus said: "To-day is salvation come to this house, for the Son of Man came to seek that which was lost."[2] This evidently refers to the purpose of the ministry of Jesus as the Messianic prophet.

On the occasion of the desire of St. James and St. John to call down fire from heaven to consume the churlish Samaritans, Jesus rebuked them and said:

"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of:
For the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives but to save."[3]

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[1] Luke x. 13. [2] Luke xix. 9, 10.

[3] Luke ix. 56; cf. Matt. xviii. 11, which latter, however, is not in best texts and is omitted in Revised Version.

This is not in the best texts of the Gospel, but it is a logion which may have been added here from another source than the Logia of St. Matthew. It states clearly the redemptive purpose of the ministry of Jesus.

There are two other passages in which the uniqueness of Jesus' work is clearly set forth.

In the Beatitude of the persecuted, Jesus said:

"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you,
And when they shall separate you, and reproach you,
And cast out your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man."[1]

This implies that the persecution would be because of their discipleship to the Son of Man as their Master.

In warning his disciples of the troublous days, he tells them: "The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it."[2] The context shows that it is the presence of the Messiah in his kingdom, or the second advent, that they will desire before the time.

We are now prepared to go back to the pas-

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[1] Luke vi. 22; cf. Matt. v. 11, where it is shortened.

[2] Luke xvii. 22.

sage with which we started, where Jesus affirms that *the Son of Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins.* We have seen that this was a unique authority, which separated him from all other historic or ideal persons as in a peculiar relation of intimacy with God. This is, then, in general accord with those other passages, which we have just considered, in which he represents that his ministry was one of voluntary poverty, associating familiarly with all classes of the people, seeking out the lost and endeavoring to save men; that he had an authority, to speak against which, though forgivable, was a greater sin than to speak against any other than the divine Spirit; that he was Lord of the Sabbath day; and so, in our passage, that he had authority on earth to forgive sins. This authority of Jesus, which was one of the most characteristic features of his teaching and miracle working — "For he taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes"[1] — might refer to his prophetic call, were it not that it extends beyond the work of the prophetic Servant of the Second Isaiah into the scope of the lawgiving of the

[1] Mark i. 22; Matt. vii. 29; Luke iv. 32; Messiah of the Gospels, p. 80.

Prophet greater than Moses.[1] It is probable, therefore, that Jesus had this prophecy of Moses in mind in his Messianic consciousness on these occasions. This is made probable by his words to his disciples after his resurrection as reported by St. Luke: "These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning me."[2] There is no other Messianic prediction in the Law of which he would be so likely to speak as just this one of a second Moses. And this is the very one which the apostles refer most frequently to Jesus in the apostolic age.[3]

This is still further confirmed by the fact that when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, he instituted a new covenant which is in antithesis to the old covenant instituted through the mediation of Moses at Sinai;[4] and this very fact implies that Jesus knew that he was the second Moses of that prophecy.

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[1] Deut. xviii. 16–19; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 110 *seq.*

[2] Luke xxiv. 44.

[3] Acts iii. 22; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 30 *seq.*

[4] Mark xiv. 22–25; Matt. xxvi. 26–29; Luke xxii. 18–20; 1 Cor. xi. 23–26; Ex. xxiv. 3–8; Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 120 *seq.*

An additional confirmation to this is in the fact that according to the Gospel of St. John, Jesus said in view of the Lord's Supper: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves."[1] The Son of Man was therefore the Second Moses, the mediator of the new covenant, in his own most precious blood.

It seems, therefore, that Jesus, in his title *Son of Man*, summed up in his consciousness the several Messianic ideals of the Old Testament, namely: the Son of Man and the Prophet of the Second Isaiah, as in the Similitudes of Enoch, and these with the Messianic King and the Prophet greater than Moses, which had not previously been combined therewith by any one; and thus taught his disciples that combination of Messianic ideas which appears in the apostolic teaching in the Book of Acts.[2]

5. Thus far no statement has been made as to the origin of Jesus. If Jesus spake any words relating to his pre-existence and incarnation, they are not reported in the Synoptic Gospels. Are we justified in supposing that he never said anything on this subject? Is the silence of the

[1] John vi. 53; cf. vi. 27.

[2] Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 21 *seq.*, 67 *seq.*

Synoptic Gospels conclusive? There are some who think so. And yet there is something to be said on the other side. If he did not teach his pre-existence explicitly in any of the passages cited, we may yet say that the very term *Son of Man implies pre-existence.* We have seen that the Son of Man of Daniel comes to earth on the clouds of heaven after pre-existence in heaven, without any thought of pre-existence on earth. We have seen that the Son of Man of the Similitudes of Enoch had pre-existence in heaven prior to the creation of the sun and the stars, and that he remained concealed there until his coming on the clouds to the earth. When now Jesus so distinctly identifies himself with the Son of Man of Daniel, and represents his second advent as the advent on the clouds, does he limit the conception of his pre-existence in heaven to the time from his ascension to his second advent? If Jesus knew only of the prediction of Daniel, we might suppose that he was induced, by his identification of the Son of Man with the Messianic Prophet, Lawgiver, and King, to think of an earthly ministry prior to the heavenly abode; but we cannot be sure of this, because another alternative was open to him, namely, that of thinking of his earthly ministry as an episode between his pre-

existence in heaven and his post-existence in heaven. There is no *a priori* reason against either alternative. Which alternative did Jesus take? We may be guided to the right conclusion by several considerations.

1. The Similitudes of Enoch represent that the Son of Man pre-existed in heaven from before the creation of the sun and the stars, and this notwithstanding the fact that the author identifies with the Son of Man the elect Servant of the Second Isaiah.

It is very probable, for many reasons which cannot be mentioned here, that Jesus knew the Similitudes of Enoch. The best authority on the Book of Enoch, Dr. Charles, thinks so, and so have I thought for many years.[1] Jesus agrees with the Similitudes of Enoch in taking the Son of Man as personal, and in identifying him with the elect Servant. It is most probable, therefore, that he agreed with the author of the Similitudes that the heavenly state was not merely subsequent to the resurrection, but was from before the creation of the world; and therefore the earthly life must have been intermediate between the two heavenly states, for there was no other time left open for it.

[1] See Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 25, 84.

2. There can be no doubt that St. Paul, in his conception of the Second Adam, conceives of him as pre-existent in heaven prior to his earthly life.[1] It is most reasonable to suppose that his doctrine was based on the teaching of Jesus, rather than entirely original with himself.

3. Although there is no explicit statement as to pre-existence in the Synoptic Gospels, there are explicit statements in the Gospel of St. John, and two of these connected with the term *Son of Man*, in words which no reasonable criticism can detach from Jesus himself. Thus in his discourse with Nicodemus Jesus said: "And no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man."[2] Again, Jesus said to those of his disciples who were objecting to his hard sayings: "What then if ye should behold the Son of Man ascending where he was before?"[3]

In these passages there is a direct antithesis between ascending to heaven and descending from heaven, the place whither he is to ascend and the place where he was before. If he ascended to heaven at his ascension, he descended

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[1] See Sermon IV.

[2] John iii. 13.

[3] John vi. 62.

from heaven at his entrance into the world. If the one is real, the other is real also. There is identity of place.

Both of these sayings were esoteric, to Nicodemus and to select disciples. There was no special reason why either should have been given by the Synoptists, even if they knew of them. There is no reasonable ground on which to discredit them. They are in accord with the Similitudes of Enoch on the one side, and the epistles of St. Paul on the other, in their interpretation of the pre-existence of the Son of Man.

These two passages from the Gospel of St. John, where *the Son of Man* is used, are confirmed by many more where *the Son of the Father* is used. But they are reserved for the next sermon.

If any one should think it strange that Jesus should have been reticent as to his pre-existence as the Son of Man prior to his earthly life, and that he should have withheld this doctrine in so much of his teaching as is reported in the Synoptic Gospels, let him consider that it was characteristic of Jesus' entire procedure with reference to his own person.

For: (*a*) he warned the Twelve, after St. Peter confessed him as the Messiah, not to tell it to

any one;[1] and the reason was, that it would precipitate the crisis and hurry on his crucifixion for blasphemy before the time.

(*b*) Even in the very last week, Jesus declined to tell the delegation from the Sanhedrim by what authority he acted.[2] Not until he was put under oath by the high-priest before the Sanhedrim, did he publicly acknowledge that he was the Messiah, and then immediately he was charged with blasphemy and condemned to death for blasphemy.

(*c*) The reason why Jesus used the term *Son of Man* was doubtless because it was less likely to be understood than any other. He veiled under this term all his fulfilment of all the Messianic terms of the ancient Scriptures. He avoided all the efforts of the devil and of the Pharisees to bring his claims to be the Son of Man to the test of descending on the clouds of heaven as the Son of Man of Daniel was to do. They could not understand that the Son of Man could be any other than one whose advent to earth was in precisely this way. And therefore they could treat Jesus' claim to be the Son of Man with contempt, while they understood it

[1] Mark viii. 30; Matt. xvi. 20; Luke ix. 21.

[2] Mark xi. 27–33; Matt. xxi. 23–27; Luke xx. 1–8.

to be some sort of an indefinite claim to be the Messiah.

But Jesus consciously used this term not only to veil his Messianic claims until the time of the crisis came; but also as the most appropriate one under which to sum up all the Old Testament references to a human Messiah; so that when the proper time had come and the Messiah gave the Messianic sign of the Son of Man by his resurrection from the dead, after the symbolism of the story of Jonah, his disciples saw clearly that in him were realized all the predictions of the Holy Scriptures, that he was the Second Moses, the mediator of the new covenant, the suffering and dying Prophet of the Second Isaiah, the Messianic King of the prediction of Nathan to David, and last of all the Son of Man of Daniel, who descended from a pre-existent life in heaven with God in order to an earthly ministry in which he had a unique authority, such as no one before him had exercised, such as was unknown to predictive prophecy, such as involved blasphemy if he was not indeed that unique person, the Son of Man from heaven.

II

THE SON OF THE FATHER

II

THE SON OF THE FATHER

All things have been delivered unto me of my Father,
And no one knoweth the Son save the Father;
Neither doth any one know the Father save the Son,
And he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.

MATT. xi. 27; LUKE x. 22.

THESE words of Jesus are a logion, derived by our Gospels of Matthew and Luke from the primitive Logia of St. Matthew. This logion is given in connection with a number of other logia of varying importance in the Gospel of St. Matthew. But it is attached by St. Luke to the return of the Seventy from their successful ministry. Entirely apart from the question when it was uttered, this logion gives the exact words of Jesus with reference to his own sonship as the Son of the Father, so far as words in the Greek language can express by translation words that were uttered in Aramaic and first written in Hebrew.

Jesus represents in this logion that he was the Son of his Father, God, that he was the only

Son of the Father, and that he was in possession of a unique authority delivered unto him by the Father, and a unique knowledge of the Father; and that no one could know the Father unless the Son revealed the Father to him.

The Son of God is a Messianic term familiar to the Jews of the time of our Lord from the usage of the Old Testament Scriptures. The Judaic writer of the Hexateuch states in connection with the Mosaic covenant: "Yahweh saith to Moses, — And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, 'Thus saith Yahweh: Israel is my son, my first-born.'"[1] That is, Yahweh takes Israel as a nation into a special relation of sonship to himself as distinguished from all other nations. Then in the covenant with David, Nathan the prophet saith to him:

"Therefore Yahweh doth tell thee,
That Yahweh will make thee a house,
And it will come to pass, when thy days will be fulfilled,
And thou wilt lie down with thy fathers,
I will raise up thy seed after thee,
Him who will issue from thy bowels.
I will establish his kingdom.
He will build a house to my name,
And I will establish his throne forever.

[1] Ex. iv. 22; Messianic Prophecy, p. 100.

I will become a father to him,
And he will become a son to me."[1]

This is the covenant of David. The seed, or royal line of David, is constituted in a special sense the Son of God, and the reigning king of the dynasty is in a peculiar relation to God as his Son. Accordingly, on the day of installation of the Messianic king he is addressed by God —

"Thou art My son;
This day have I begotten thee."[2]

And again,

"Sit thou enthroned at My right hand
Until I make thine enemies thy footstool."[3]

Accordingly, in the usage of the Jews, Son of God and Messiah were identical terms. There are numerous passages in the Gospels in which Jesus is recognized as the Son of God in this sense.

Thus, at the baptism, the theophanic voice said: "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am

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[1] 2 Sam. vii. 11–16; 1 Chron. xvii. 10–14; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 126 *seq.*

[2] Ps. ii. 7; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 134 *seq.*

[3] Ps. cx. 1; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 132 *seq.*

well pleased."[1] So again, at the transfiguration, "This is my beloved Son."[2] The devil tempts Jesus with the recognition of his Messianic dignity as the Son of God.[3] St. Peter also, as the spokesman of the Twelve, says:[4] "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

According to the Gospel of St. John, Nathanael in his recognition of Jesus said, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art King of Israel."[5] The high-priest conformed to this usage when before the Sanhedrim he asked Jesus under oath: "Art thou the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed?"[6]

There can be no doubt, therefore, that Jesus regarded himself as the Son of God the Messiah,[7]

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[1] Mark i. 11; Matt. iii. 17; Luke iii. 22; John i. 34; Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 75 *seq.*

[2] Mark ix. 2–8; Matt. xvii. 1–8; Luke ix. 28–36; 2 Peter i. 16–18; Messiah of the Gospels, p. 100.

[3] Matt. iv. 1–11; Luke iv. 1–13.

[4] Matt. xvi. 16; Mark ix. 29; Luke ix. 20. But, as Mark and Luke omit the latter term, it may be that St. Peter did not use it, but it is used in Matthew as an explanatory and practically identical term.

[5] John i. 49.

[6] Mark xiv. 61; Matt. xxvi. 63; Luke xxii. 70.

[7] Other passages in which Jesus is recognized as the Son of God in the Messianic sense are Matt. viii. 29, xiv. 33, xxvii. 40, 43, 54; Mark iii. 11, v. 7, xv. 39; Luke iv. 41, viii. 28; John i. 34, xi. 27, xix. 7.

and it is therefore easy to suppose that Jesus used Son of the Father in this Messianic sense.

But it is also noteworthy that Jesus, in the reports of the Synoptic Gospels, never used the term Son of God of himself. The three passages in the Gospel of St. John [1] are so against the usage of this Gospel, that the other readings in ancient manuscripts of these passages urge us, on the principle of consistency, to think of them as scribal errors or inadvertent slips of the final editor.

The reason why Jesus avoided the technical term Son of God in speaking of himself was doubtless the same that induced him to avoid the term Messiah;[2] namely, to prevent a premature crisis before he had finished his preparatory work. He used, instead of Son of God, Son of the Father, to sum all his relations to God, just as he used, instead of Messiah, the term Son of Man to sum up all the Messianic ideals of the Old Testament on the human side of the Messianic idea.[3]

A study of the numerous passages in which Jesus sets forth his sonship to the Father makes

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[1] John v. 25, x. 36, xi. 4.

[2] See p. 27 *seq.*

[3] See p. 23.

it evident that he thinks of his sonship in a sense far transcending that of the sonship of the Messianic king.

We must also say that his conception of his own sonship is entirely different from his conception of the sonship of mankind. Jesus for the first time reveals to the world the sublime ideal of God's fatherhood of men. I do not mean by this that he was the first to make known the creative fatherhood, for that was known to heathen poets as well as to Christian and Jewish thought; but fatherhood in the sense of a continual fatherly interest in, and redemptive care for human individuals as members of the divine household, especially for those who by union with the Son of the Father become children in the family of God, this was a special revelation of Jesus. But even this conception of God's fatherhood of men, which is derived by all the Gospels from the original Logia of St. Matthew, and which was one of the most characteristic features in Jesus' teaching, was not a fatherhood which Jesus revealed out of the consciousness of that kind of sonship of the Father in himself, and as identical with that consciousness, as some have hastily supposed; for in fact Jesus never used the terms Father and Son in such a way that it is possible to interpret

him as teaching that he shared his sonship of the Father with other men. He always keeps distinct God's fatherhood of men from God's fatherhood of himself, which latter is always unique.[1]

Thus Jesus uses the term with reference to his second advent:

> "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words,
> The Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him,
> When he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."[2]

He also speaks of himself as the Son entitled to know more than the angels, and only less knowing than the Father:

> "But of that day or that hour knoweth no one,
> Not even the angels in heaven,
> Neither the Son, but the Father only."[3]

This is in striking accord with the logion which we use as our text, inasmuch as it ascribes unique knowledge to the Son, and yet makes him less knowing than the Father. It also indicates that his sonship was something more than Messianic sonship, in the sense of ancient prophecy; for no-

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[1] See Messiah of the Gospels, p. 274.

[2] Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26; cf. Matt. xvi. 27.

[3] Mark xiii. 32; Matt. xxiv. 36.

where in prophecy is the Messiah exalted above the angels in knowledge. Jesus makes the Son of Man lord of the angels in all those passages where he represents himself as sending them forth at his second advent.[1] His enlarged sense of sonship exalting him above the angels is only in accord with his extension of the conception of the Son of Man in this direction.

So we might interpret several other passages. He said unto the Twelve with reference to the Messianic kingdom:

"I appoint unto you a kingdom even as my Father appointed unto me."[2]

"And behold I send forth the promise of my Father upon you."[3]

"No one can know times or seasons,
Which the Father hath set within His own authority."[4]

So also in passages which conceive of the Father as exercising judicial functions:

"Every plant which my Father planted not shall be rooted up."[5]

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[1] See pp. 8 *seq.* [2] Luke xxii. 29. [3] Luke xxiv. 49.

[4] Acts i. 7; so Western Text, which is preferable; see Briggs' "Apostolic Commission," in Studies in Honor of B. L. Gildersleeve, p. 13.

[5] Matt. xv. 13.

"So shall my Father do unto you if ye forgive not every one his brother." [1]

In these instances, it is difficult to see why Jesus could not have said *your* or *our* Father unless he meant to emphasize his own personal relation to the Father in these acts of judgment.

In his agony in the garden it can be no other than a unique relation of sonship which in view of the impending passion impels him to cry out:

"Father, all things are possible to Thee;
Remove this cup from me:
Howbeit, not what I will but what Thou wilt." [2]

With this we may compare the words of Jesus on the cross:

"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."
"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." [3]

From these passages it is clear that Jesus was conscious of a unique relation of sonship, in

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[1] Matt. xviii. 35.

[2] Mark xiv. 36; Matt. xxvi. 39; Luke xxii. 42.

[3] Luke xxiii. 34, 46. The remaining passages in the Synoptists where "Father" is used are Matt. vii. 21, x. 32, 33, xii. 50, xvi. 17, xviii. 10, 14, 19, 35, from the Logia, and Matt. xx. 23, xxvi. 29, 53, from another source. Matt. xxviii. 19, so far as the trinitarian formula is concerned is not from Jesus. See Briggs' "Apostolic Commission," Studies in Honor of B. L. Gildersleeve, p. 10.

which he stood to God as his own Father, in which he possessed unique authority and unique knowledge as the Father's own Son.

The Gospel of St. Luke gives us an account of Jesus' words to his parents, at twelve years of age, when they found him in the temple with the doctors of the Law. He said: "Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"[1] These words indicate the consciousness of his unique relation of sonship at this early age. There is no valid reason for doubting this report of St. Luke, for the question must arise, whence did Jesus derive this consciousness of his unique relation to God as Son of the Father? Whence did he derive this consciousness of unique authority from God, and unique knowledge of God as his own Father? We might think of the authority as imparted at his baptism by the theophanic voice; that was, however, authority as the Son of God, the Messiah. Nothing more is apparent.[2] There was nothing in this event as reported in the Gospels to indicate his endowment with such absolute and exclusive authority as that asserted in our text. And even if this be

[1] Luke ii. 49. I prefer the rendering of the Authorized Version to that of the Revision.

[2] Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 75 *seq.*, also p. 35.

strained to the uttermost possible degree, whence was this consciousness of the personal relation between God, his own Father, and himself as the unique Son? This knowledge can hardly have come from reflection. There was nothing in the Messianic ideals of the Old Testament to suggest it. It was a new knowledge, and one so original and unique that we cannot think it the invention of one who makes a hypocritical and blasphemous assertion of a presumptuous conceit and vain imagination. It is impossible to find any circumstances to suggest such pretensions even if it could be thought of in the case of Jesus, the prophet, the Messiah, the Son of Man. It is necessary to think of it as originating from a reality; and if from a reality, not a reality of sudden illumination, or coming from the suggestion of the spirit of prophecy. For he speaks of it not as a new experience, a fresh inspiration, born in his soul for the first time with a call to deliver it as a message. Compare his words with those of the ancient prophets and we are impressed with the absence of any trace of the enthusiasm of such an illumination of so great a call. He speaks of his knowledge of the Father calmly, as characteristic of himself, as one that he has always possessed, as one which he never has been with-

out, and which no one else ever possessed, or ever could or ever can possess, except through him as the only one entitled to reveal the Father. Therefore, there is no reason to doubt that he had this consciousness of knowing the Father, and of doing the work of the Father, and of attending to the affairs of the Father before his baptism, and even as early as twelve years of age, so far as his consciousness as a boy was capable of this knowledge. And it was only in the order of nature that his first visit to the temple at the legal age for assuming his ceremonial duties should invoke from his inner consciousness this knowledge, in the special circumstances in which he was then for the first time placed. There is in this story the same calm statement of his sonship that we have seen in the other passages, as so characteristic of Jesus, indicating that this was no new experience, no novelty of consciousness, but a characteristic and habitual experience.

We are now prepared to study the passages relating to the Son of the Father in the Gospel of John. One of the most characteristic features of this Gospel is the use that Jesus makes of Father in addressing God or speaking of God. Seventy-nine times he says "the Father," twenty-

five-times "my Father," nine times "Father," and once "the living Father;"[1] and in all these passages the unique relation already taught in the Synoptists is either presupposed and implied, or else asserted in similar, or varied, or enhanced terms.

Thus Jesus comes into conflict with the Pharisees by healing an infirm man on the Sabbath. As in the Logia Jesus said that the Son of Man was Lord of the Sabbath,[2] so here he justifies himself by saying, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work;"[3] that is, notwithstanding the fact that God rested on the Sabbath of the Creation, he yet continued to work mighty works of judgment and redemption. Hebrew history resounds with the wondrous works of God; Hebrew poetry celebrates them in song; Hebrew Wisdom recounts them in chosen sentences; and Hebrew prophecy depicts them as characteristic of the Messianic future. Therefore, as the Son of the Father, Jesus was entitled to work these mighty works as the Father worked them.

The author of this Gospel tells us that the Jews sought to kill him, not only because he

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[1] Messiah of the Gospels, p. 274.

[2] Sermon I., p. 17. [3] John v. 17.

brake the Sabbath, but because he was guilty of a much greater sin, in that he also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God ; that is, they understood him to be claiming sonship to God in a unique sense, as belonging to him alone, with the necessary implication that he made himself equal with God. Jesus did not say this. It was the inference of the Pharisee doctors who heard him. But it is the same inference that Christians subsequently made, and it is altogether probable that Jesus' words were designed to imply as much. But he was not explicit. He veiled here as elsewhere his personal revelation behind his revelation in word and work and his mission from God. In the subsequent context there is a larger statement of the works that Jesus did and was to do as the Father's own Son.

"Verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing ; for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that Himself doeth ; and greater works than these will He shew him, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quick-

eneth whom he will. For neither doth the Father judge any man, but He hath given all judgment unto the Son; that all may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father that sent him.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son;[1] and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in himself: and He gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is Son of Man."[2]

Jesus states that the Son does whatsoever the Father doeth because the Father in love showeth him all things that he doeth. This is only an enlargement of the statement of our logion "*All things have been delivered unto me of my Father.*"

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[1] The words "Son of God," in my opinion, were not said by Jesus; but they came into the text either as the editor's unconscious substitution of his own term for that of Jesus, or as an early copyist's mistake.

[2] John v. 19–27.

He also says here that the Father hath given all judgment unto the Son. This is a specification of what is already contained in the "*all things;*" and is in entire accord with the judgment to be exercised by the Son of Man at his second advent, according to the Synoptists. The additional feature given here is that the Father hath given to the Son to have life in himself and to be the fountain of life to men; for the Son, like the Father, "raiseth the dead and quickeneth whom he will." This is certainly new in specification; but it is not surprisingly new in view of the judgment which presupposes resurrection, and of the "*all things*" which could not therefore exclude it.

So Jesus says in his last discourse, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee: even as Thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given him, to them he should give eternal life."[1] The life of the Son in himself as well as the authority to exercise judgment, and to do mighty works and give eternal life, are all alike derivative from the Father, although the Son does the same things, in all these respects that the Father does, equally with Him.

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[1] John xvii. 1, 2.

There are several passages in the Gospel of John in which the unique knowledge of God, which the Son has, according to our logion, is set forth in strong terms. Jesus said: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he that is from God, he hath seen the Father."[1] — "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father that glorifieth me; of whom ye say, that He is your God; and ye have not known Him: but I know Him; and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know Him and keep His word."[2] — "I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father."[3] — "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me."[4] And in his last discourse: "O righteous Father, the world knew Thee not, but I knew Thee."[5] In these passages there is no difference from the teaching of our logion other than fulness of detail, and specification of its general terms.

There is no assertion of pre-existence in any of the passages in the Synoptic Gospels. There is

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[1] John vi. 46. [2] John viii. 54, 55. [3] John x. 14, 15.
[4] John xiv. 6. [5] John xvii. 25.

no explicit teaching of the pre-existence of the Son of the Father any more than of the Son of Man. But does not the term Son of the Father in itself imply pre-existence as well as the term Son of Man?[1] If we find it impossible to conceive of such a unique relation and such a unique knowledge of the Father, as originating as a new experience at any stage in the earthly life of Jesus, what else can we think than that he brought it into the world with him from a pre-existent state? If he was the only Son of the Father, the only one through whom the Father could ever be revealed to mankind, can we suppose that such a son originated for the first time when Jesus was born into the world? Can we suppose that this consciousness of sonship and knowledge of the Father, which appears in him so soon as Jesus himself appears, and which was a native endowment, as natural to him as any other characteristic of his person, that this consciousness originated in his birth from Mary? Such knowledge is intellectual and it is moral; and must have intellectual and moral causes, and could not originate by heredity, especially where there was no such inheritance from his human

[1] See Sermon I., p. 24.

ancestry. Some scholars content themselves with defining this unique relation as a moral one; but it is necessary to go further and ask what is meant by this moral relation; and how it originated. There can be but one answer to the question when it is pressed to its necessary consequences.

This personal relation between the Father and the Son is a reciprocal one. It is not simply that no one knows the Father but the Son; but no one knows the Son but the Father. The knowledge of the Father by the Son and the knowledge of the Son by the Father are reciprocal the one to the other. It is possible to think that the Father's knowledge of the Son was a knowledge of an ideal of such a Son in His decree and purpose: but we cannot say this of the Son's knowledge of the Father. Does not the reciprocal knowledge stated in equal terms in the parallelism of the two clauses of Hebrew Wisdom imply a knowledge not only co-extensive in personal relations but also co-extensive in temporal relations? Furthermore this special relation and this unique knowledge is exclusive of all others, not only of men but of angels; for it is absolutely unlimited. And although angels are not mentioned in this passage, they are mentioned in other passages in which the Son of the Father

is conceived as above them in authority and power. And there can be no doubt that Jesus regarded himself as having authority over the angels. Therefore a necessary implication is that he not only included the angels when he said, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father," as he did a short time afterwards when he said, "All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth,"[1] but he also included the angels when he said, "*No one knoweth the Father save the Son*," and also in the clause "*No one save he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.*" Therefore Jesus meant to represent himself as the revealer of the Father to angels as well as to men; and so he was as conscious of his pre-existence as the Son of the Father with the angels, as the revealer of the Father to the angels, as he was certain of his post-existence after his death on the cross as the mediator of angels and men.

What is implicitly contained in this logion is explicitly taught in a number of passages in the Gospel of John. It is doubtless true that in this Gospel we are not so near to the exact words and the exact conceptions of Jesus as in the sayings of the Logia of St. Matthew and the

[1] Matt. xxviii. 18.

Synoptic Gospels. The author, as I think, translates an original Hebrew Gospel of St. John, and enlarges it with explanatory words and sentences setting forth the thinking about Jesus' life and teachings current toward the close of the century among the pupils of St. John.[1] He also to a much larger extent than the authors of the Synoptic Gospels seeks to give the substance of Jesus' thought, rather than his words; and not infrequently so mingles interpretation and exposition with the words of Jesus that it is not easy to distinguish between what Jesus actually said and what the author understood him to have meant. But taking all such things into account, we may yet be confident that we can determine substantially Jesus' teaching about himself in this Gospel as well as in the others; and we ought not to be surprised to find more advanced teaching, inasmuch as the teaching in St. John is so largely esoteric, to the chosen disciples or the Pharisee doctors; and these discourses of John's Gospel were given chiefly in the last few weeks of his life in Jerusalem, whereas the sentences of the Logia were given at a much earlier date in Galilee or in Perea.

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[1] General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture, p. 327.

According to the sixth chapter of St. John, Jesus teaches that he came down from his Father as the bread from heaven. "For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world." — "I am the bread of life." — "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me."[1] His hearers, according to St. John, certainly understood, that which his words seem clearly to teach, that he came down from a pre-existent life in heaven; for they said: "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How doth he now say, I am come down from heaven"?[2] The term bread of God is metaphorical, but the coming down from heaven of the Son cannot be metaphorical; for this coming was to teach his unique knowledge of God, and work the unique works of God, as in the other passages, for the salvation of men. That which was implicit there is explicit here.

Jesus tells the Pharisees, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world."[3]

What is this but to separate himself as heavenly in origin from all others as originating in

[1] John vi. 33–38; cf. vi. 51. [2] John vi. 42.
[3] John viii. 23.

this world? Farther on he says: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad."[1] He might be understood to say that Abraham as a prophet in prophetic vision saw his day as an ideal of prophecy, and rejoiced in that vision. But the Pharisees did not so understand him. They interpreted his words as teaching his personal pre-existence with Abraham; for they said unto him: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"[2] Jesus does not reject their interpretation, but accepts it in his reply, and goes further still, claiming pre-existence before Abraham. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I am."[3] It is evident that his hearers understood him to teach pre-existence prior to Abraham, for they thought it to be blasphemy, and in a passion they took up stones to cast at him.

It is indeed difficult to see how any other interpretation is possible. It is true that many scholars think that Jesus is teaching ideal pre-existence. But ideal pre-existence was familiar to his Pharisee hearers. There was in the current

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[1] John viii. 56. [2] John viii. 57.

[3] John viii. 58; Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 283 *seq.*

opinion of the time an ideal pre-existence of the Law, of the Temple, of Jerusalem, of the Throne of glory, of Paradise, of Gehenna, and of other religious things, and also of the name of the Messiah,[1] even before the creation of the world. Jesus might have stated his ideal pre-existence, therefore, without shocking his hearers to so great an extent. If the facts of the case are correctly stated in this Gospel, there can be no reasonable doubt that Jesus taught his real pre-existence and that what he said was either blasphemy or a reality.

In the last discourse of Jesus according to St. John, which is probably a combination of his words spoken on several occasions, there are several distinct statements respecting his union with the Father and pre-existence as the Son of the Father. To Philip he said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. — I am in the Father, and the Father in me."[2] This is as much as to say that the unique relation of sonship was so close, that the Son resembled the Father so exactly, that the Son was in such unity with the Father, that the Father was in the Son, and the Father

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[1] Messiah of the Apostles, p. 8.

[2] John xiv. 9, 11.

appeared in the Son, and was seen in the Son. And so he says furthermore: "In that day," that is, the day of the advent of the Paraclete, "ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."[1] Again he said to the disciples: "I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father."[2] The antithetical clauses make it evident that the pre-existence is as real as the post-existence; the coming from the Father into the world as much an event in history as the going unto the Father.

I am not concerned to exaggerate the number of passages that teach the real pre-existence of Jesus Christ. There can be no doubt that the conception of an ideal pre-existence prepared the way, in the thought of the centuries in the midst of which Jesus was born, for the conception of the real personal pre-existence of the Son of God when the time had come for them to understand it. It matters little, therefore, *a priori*, how many passages you may regard as teaching this ideal pre-existence, so long as you recognize that eventually the doctrine of the real pre-existence emerges. I would not be troubled in the least,

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[1] John xiv. 20, cf. xvii. 21. [2] John xvi. 28.

if it could be shown that every passage in the Gospels teaches nothing more than ideal pre-existence. I have carefully examined all the arguments of learned men in favor of this theory. I have no prejudice whatever against their views. But it seems evident to me that not only are their arguments forced and inconclusive, going only so far and halting where we cannot stop thinking, but that the positive arguments on the other side for the real personal pre-existence of the Son of Man and the Son of the Father are convincing and impregnable so far as Biblical Criticism and Biblical Exegesis can go.

The conception of the pre-existence of the Son culminates as we might anticipate, in the high-priestly prayer of Jesus. Here, in that deep, vital, and comprehensive experience, when he bears upon his soul the burden of the salvation of his disciples and of their disciples in long line of succession until the consummation of his redemptive work, he prays incidentally for himself: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."[1] And he expresses the certainty of a son's confidence when he says: "For

[1] John xvii. 5.

Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."[1] In these passages, the unique relation of sonship, which in the passages previously considered has unfolded into a unique knowledge, a unique authority of working, a unique power of life, a unique oneness with the Father — before the Son descended from heaven, from the Father, into the world, before the birth of Abraham, the father of Israel — reaches its climax in a unique relation of love and a unique relation of glory before the creation of the world.

The ideal of the Son of the Father, as comprehending the relation of Jesus to God, has thus unfolded in parallelism with the ideal of the Son of Man summing up the relation of Jesus to humanity ; and both ideals alike in the Gospel of St. John explicitly set forth what was implicitly involved in the Synoptic ideals, namely, the preexistence of that holy person who comprehended both ideals, Son of Man and Son of the Father, before the creation of the world in a state of everlasting heavenly glory with God, into which the earthly life came as an episode of redemptive teaching and work for the salvation of the children of mankind.

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[1] John xvii. 24.

III

BORN OF A WOMAN UNDER THE LAW

III

BORN OF A WOMAN UNDER THE LAW

But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, that he might redeem them which were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. — GAL. iv. 4, 5.

THE Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is one of the cardinal facts and doctrines of the Christian religion. The Incarnation of Christ and the Resurrection of Christ are the two poles of the Christian system of doctrine. The Pauline writings lay their chief stress on the Resurrection, and the Johannine writings on the Incarnation; but this is a matter of proportion, for both sets of writings recognize the two as essential facts and fundamental doctrines of Christ and Christianity.

Divine revelation is gradual in its instruction, it is manifold in its training, here a little, there a little, step by step, as mankind in the many generations are able to understand it and use it. As

the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us, "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in the Son."[1]

And so the revelation in the Son was not given all at once, but Jesus taught the Twelve gradually as they were able to understand him; and he did not give them a full and complete revelation of himself. He promised them that after his departure to the Father he would send them another Paraclete or Counsellor. He told the Twelve: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, these shall he speak, and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you."[2]

Therefore, those people are mistaken who think we are to find the last and highest revelation in the teachings of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels. Jesus himself tells us that we are

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[1] Heb. i. 1, 2.

[2] John xvi. 12–14.

rather to find it in the teachings of his disciples, as they were guided by the divine Spirit to understand the great facts of the life of Jesus. It was impossible that they should understand these before the earthly life of Jesus had reached its end, and all the facts of his life were for the first time illuminated by the enthronement of Christ at the right hand of God and the advent of the divine Spirit. On the day of Pentecost the Church of Christ was instituted; but the Spirit did not give his instruction all at once, on that birthday of the Church; he began a training which was to continue through the apostolic age, in the gradual enlightenment of the apostles and prophets, to understand the life and work of Christ. They did not understand the whole significance of the resurrection of Christ all at once: so they only gradually learned the significance of the Incarnation. The Incarnation was a fact, an event in the history of the world, and as such it has its historical importance, whatever any one may think about it; but it is just what men think about it which determines their attitude to it, and the religious influence it may have upon them. In this series of discourses, I am endeavoring to trace the development of the doctrine of the Incarnation within the writings

of the New Testament, as Christ through his spirit gradually revealed it to his disciples.

The earliest writing which has been preserved for us from apostolic hands, in my opinion, is the Epistle to the Galatians, written by St. Paul from Antioch shortly before the apostolic council at Jerusalem within seventeen or eighteen years after the Resurrection of Christ.[1] The common opinion is that the epistle was written some years later, in the spring of A. D. 58, shortly after the Epistles to the Corinthians and shortly before the Epistle to the Romans. There is much in common between the Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to the Romans. This has misled scholars to the opinion of nearness of composition. The Epistles to the Corinthians stand apart by themselves. So far as Christology is concerned, the order of development is Galatians, Corinthians, Romans.

It is evident from these epistles that St. Paul emphasized the resurrection of Christ rather than the incarnation, and that his mind starts from the resurrection backwards through the death of Christ to his birth into this world. It

[1] The early date of this epistle is shown in an article *The Date of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians,* by Emilie Grace Briggs, *New World,* March, 1900.

was natural and indeed necessary that this should be the experience of this apostle. For he did not know Jesus during his earthly life. He had not the privilege of his personal training and friendship. He was startled in his career as a persecutor by a Christophany. He saw the Christ in his glorious majesty interposing in behalf of his persecuted followers.[1] The risen and enthroned Christ was the Christ whom St. Paul knew in this Christophany, by his sense-perception, and subsequently by his intellectual conception and imagination in his communion with him in faith and contemplation. All that he learned about Christ from the earlier disciples subsequently was built upon this, to him the most essential knowledge. St. Paul knew Christ as his own personal Saviour, who had transformed him from Saul the Pharisee to a Christian prophet and apostle.[2] His experience was expressed in his words, "The Law hath been our tutor to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith."[3] The Law had performed this service for him and for others like him. Christ the Son of God represented a higher dispensation than

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[1] Acts ix. 1–9; xxii. 5–11; xxvi. 10–18.

[2] Phil. iii. 4–14.

[3] Gal. iii. 24.

the Law in which he had been trained previously. The Law of God, leading on in its development to the Christ of God, necessarily involved that both the Law and the Christ had been comprehended in God's purpose and plan from the beginning; and thus the apostle's mind springs to the birth of Christ as bringing to completion the dispensation of the Law, and introducing the dispensation of Christ; a birth which came when God purposed it should come in the fulness and completeness of the Time.

1. St. Paul conceives of the birth of Christ as a birth under the Law. Christ was born, as a Jew, under the dispensation of the Jewish Law, inheriting all its privileges, but also sharing in all its burdens. Although he was blameless under the Law and although he fulfilled all its righteousness, he yet had to submit to all the injustice and wrong wrought by the administrators of the Law. He was persecuted by the Pharisee lawyers, condemned to death as a blasphemer by the judges in the supreme court of the Sanhedrim, and crucified by a Roman executive as a malefactor. He bore the curse pronounced by the Law upon every one hanging on a tree.[1] Christ undertook this burden of the

[1] Gal. iii. 13.

Law "that he might redeem them which were under the Law." He showed by his life and teaching that the Law was incompetent for full salvation, that something higher than the Law was needed, and that the time for the higher dispensation had come. He lived the life of bondage under the Law, and he also lived the higher life of a Son of God, a life of holy self-sacrificing love; and he introduced all who entered into communion with him into that higher life, a life of the liberty of faith and love of a child of God, in place of the life of the bondage of fear and the obedience of a servant. This was the purpose of his birth under the Law, this was the reason why God sent forth His Son to be born under the Law.

The fulness of the time, therefore, must be a fulness which makes full a time going back to the first giving of the Law. When God first gave the Law in its earliest and simplest form to Moses, and made the old covenant on the basis of that Law, he designed that Law as a preparation for the mission of His Son. And so through the centuries of the Old Testament dispensation, as the Law unfolded into a multitude of precepts and passed through many stages of codification until it reached its completion in the Law as

contained in the Canon of Holy Scripture,[1] it all the time was preparing Israel for the higher revelation when the Old Covenant was to pass over into the New Covenant, and the Law was to give place to the Gospel. The birth of the Son of God "under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law," was a mission from God the Father in order to fulfil His plan and purpose which He formed before He spake the Ten Words in the thunders of Sinai, before the Old Covenant was made on the basis of the Law. It was in the fulness and ripeness of that time, which rolled on in incessant preparation through all the centuries of Jewish history from Moses to Christ.

2. St. Paul conceives of the birth of Christ as a birth of the seed of Abraham to fulfil the divine promise to Abraham. This conception is not given in the words of our text, but it is plainly stated in both the previous and subsequent contexts, and in the wider sweep of the discourse. Thus St. Paul says: "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many: but as of one, And to

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[1] Briggs' Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch, new edition, pp. 160 *seq.*

thy seed, which is Christ."[1] "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise."[2] In other words, Jesus Christ was born into the world as the seed of Abraham through whom the inheritance of Abraham was to come upon all who are Christ's. The promise to Abraham was an earlier stage of preparation than the stage of the Law, but it contained something more than the Law contained. The Law unfolded a certain portion of the divine revelation only, and not the whole of it. As St. Paul said, "A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the Law which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect."[3] — "The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance."[4] Even though long forgotten and pushed in the background by other later and apparently more important things, they will stand forth in their own time, in their proper place and importance. And so it was that in the fulness of time, the Son of God was born as the seed of Abraham, as well as the prophet who was to perfect and complete the work of

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[1] Gal. iii. 16.
[2] Gal. iii. 29.
[3] Gal. iii. 17.
[4] Rom. xi. 29.

Moses. Accordingly that time whose fulness was attained when Jesus Christ was born dates back in its origin prior to the birth of Isaac and the call of Abraham. As Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad."[1] It was the plan and purpose of God, when He called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees and sent him into the land of Canaan to become the father of the faithful and endowed him with the covenant of promise,[2] to use him and his descendants through all the generations to prepare the way for that fulness of time, when He would send His Son to secure for the seed of Abraham the promised inheritance and to make them heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

3. St. Paul conceives of Jesus Christ as "born of a woman." This phrase, placed alongside of and antecedent to the other phrase "born under the Law," has a parallel significance which St. Paul only suggests in this passage, but which he unfolds in the Epistle to the Romans. As he was born under the Law to redeem those that were under the Law, so he was born of a woman to

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[1] John viii. 56. See Sermon II., p. 55.

[2] Gen. xii. 1–4.

redeem those that were born of woman, that is, the human race as such. He was not born to redeem the Jews only, but to redeem the human race as well. This St. Paul states clearly in this epistle where he says, "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye all are one in Christ Jesus."[1]

In the Epistle to the Romans St. Paul regards Christ as the second Adam over against the first Adam who sinned and brought an entail of woe upon our race. He conceives of sin and death entering into the world through the fall of the first Adam. He represents all the race of his descendants as under the bondage of sin and the tyranny of death.[2] Jesus the Son of God was born as the seed of the woman, the second Adam, to redeem mankind from this bondage and tyranny and to bring them forth into the freedom of sonship and the heritage of everlasting life. This is the great thought of the Epistle to

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[1] Gal. iii. 26–28.

[2] See Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 152 *seq.*

the Romans. "For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ."[1] "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering, condemned sin in the flesh, that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."[2] It is evident, therefore, that the time which reaches its fulness when Christ is born, goes back in its origin to the time when our first parents sinned and fell in the garden of Eden. When Jesus Christ was born of a woman, he was born as the seed of the woman of that first gospel given to mankind immediately after the Fall. And so we must think of the antediluvian time from Adam to Noah, and of the patriarchal time from Noah to Abraham, as the earlier unfoldings of that one great epoch extending from the sin of Adam to the advent

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[1] Rom. v. 17.

[2] Rom. viii. 1–4.

of Christ, whose one essential, all-dominating purpose was to prepare more and more fully, as the centuries went by, for that fulness of the time when the woman's seed was to be born and mankind redeemed from sin and death.

The apostle does not in these passages go farther back in time than the fall of mankind, and the original promise to our first parents; but elsewhere the work of Christ in this world is represented as in accordance with a plan and purpose of God of a still earlier period. Thus St. Peter speaks of him as the lamb "who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world;"[1] and in the Second Epistle to St. Timothy it is said that the purpose of God's grace in Christ was "before times eternal."[2]

When now we put all these statements together and try to deduce from them their full significance, we go far beyond the scope of St. Paul's intention and raise more questions than can be answered. This much is evident, that it was in the plan and purpose of God to send His Son into the world at a certain definite time in history, which St. Paul designates as the fulness of the time, and that time began, to St. Paul's mind in our pas-

[1] 1 Peter i. 20. [2] 2 Tim. i. 9.

sage, after the first sin of our race, with the first promise of redemption. There can be no doubt that the New Testament writers elsewhere conceive of the plan of redemption as devised in the counsels of eternity, but there is no evidence that St. Paul conceives of the time whose fulness he speaks of here as extending so far backward. Rather the "times eternal" of Second Timothy are a plural of æons whose sum is eternity, and these are all prior to the time of the preparation for the advent of the Son of God, of which St. Paul here speaks as attaining its fulness when Christ was born.[1]

4. St. Paul tells us that God sent forth His Son; that is, the Son of God was born on a mission from the Father. Does that imply the pre-existence of the Son? Our text is not definite in its statement at this point, and logical deductions from it are not decisive.

That the Son of God was born on a mission from God, does not necessarily imply that he had a prior heavenly existence with God before he was born. For of Jeremiah the prophet God said, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb

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[1] Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 237 *seq.*

I sanctified thee, I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations."[1] And of John the Baptist it was said by the angel of the annunciation, "He shall be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God."[2] It would be entirely in accordance with good usage to say that God sent forth His Son born of a woman, born under the Law, even if he were simply a prophet, whose life began with his conception and birth. It would simply imply that Jesus had a mission from God, as the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the seed of David, of ancient prophecy, to redeem men and to secure their adoption as the children of God.

St. Paul tells us that the birth of the Son of God was in accordance with the purpose of God formed and proclaimed on different occasions from the time of Adam onwards. This implies that the Son of God was in the plan and purpose of God through all this preparatory dispensation, but it does not necessarily imply that the Son of God was a real being existing in heaven before he was born of woman on this earth. In other words, the passage implies the ideal pre-existence

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[1] Jer. i. 5. [2] Luke i. 15, 16.

in the plan of God, but not real pre-existence as a heavenly being.

Both of these statements would be in entire accordance with the doctrine of the real pre-existence of Christ, if we could prove that doctrine to have been in the mind of St. Paul at this time, or about this time, from other passages of his writings. But we cannot prove it from this passage. There is nothing in its favor in the Epistle to the Galatians or in the Epistle to the Romans. But in the Epistle to the Corinthians there are several passages of some importance which teach the real pre-existence of the Son of God.[1] These passages will all be examined in our next sermon.

If the Epistle to the Galatians were, as many hold, subsequent to these Epistles to the Corinthians, then it would be difficult to avoid the conclusion that St. Paul, when he wrote the Epistle to the Galatians, had the real pre-existence of Christ in his mind, even if it is so far in the background of his thought that we do not see it when he tells us of Christ's mission into the world. But if we make the Epistle to the Gala-

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 6, xi. 3, xv. 45–47 ; 2 Cor. viii. 9. See Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 99 *seq.*

tians a number of years earlier than the Epistles to the Corinthians, we may conclude that the Epistle to the Galatians gives us the earliest conception that St. Paul had of the Incarnation; and that he was guided by the divine Spirit to a fuller and richer conception when he wrote the Epistles to the Corinthians. If St. Paul knew of the teaching of Jesus as to the Son of Man and Son of the Father, his words in our text might be understood as implying the pre-existence that our Lord himself taught. But St. Paul never listened to that teaching of Jesus which is given in the Gospels. So far as we can know, he died his martyr death before any of them were composed. All that he knew of the teaching of Jesus at this time he had learned in very brief interviews with St. Peter and St. James and other original disciples in Jerusalem,[1] and we have no evidence that they then told him of these things. The teaching of the original disciples as reported in the Book of Acts prior to the council at Jerusalem, contain no reference whatever to the pre-existence of our Lord. Therefore we cannot interpret St. Paul's words in his earliest epistles by the teaching of Jesus of which he was probably ignorant at that time.

[1] Gal. i. 17–19.

It is unwise in our study of Holy Scripture to go beyond the necessary consequences of its statements. It is of no advantage to Christian theology to build on uncertain interpretations. Let it suffice us at present to take our stand by the simplest explanation of our passage, which can hardly be questioned, namely, that God, immediately after the sin and fall of our first parents, determined to redeem mankind by sending the Son of God into the world; that He promised to our first parents the woman's seed, to Abraham a seed of inheritance, to Moses a prophet greater than himself; and that these, and all the subsequent unfoldings in prophecy and history, were preparatory to the fulness of the time, when Jesus Christ came into the world. Then God sent him, he was born of a woman to redeem mankind; he was born as the seed of Abraham to secure the inheritance of Abraham; he was born under the Law to redeem from under the Law; and the goal of all was sonship and joint heirship with Christ for all who attached themselves to him by faith and baptism.

IV

THE SELF-IMPOVERISHMENT OF THE LORD

IV

THE SELF-IMPOVERISHMENT OF THE LORD

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich. — 2 Cor. viii. 9.

THESE words of St. Paul represent that Jesus Christ was at one time rich, and that subsequently he became poor. According to the Evangelists, Jesus was poor during his entire ministry. He had no home, no property, no possessions. He was poor before he began his ministry. He was the carpenter's son brought up in obscure Nazareth, earning his daily bread by the toil of his hands. He was born poor. His parents, though of the royal line of David, when they went to their native city for the enrolment decreed by Augustus, had no home into which they could be received, and there was no room for them in the inn. They had to take refuge in a cattle stall. There Jesus was born

and was cradled in a manger. So after his birth his parents were compelled to flee to Egypt to escape the blood bath of Bethlehem. Therefore it is impossible to think of any time during the earthly life of Jesus, from his birth in the manger until his death on the cross, when it could be said that he was rich. He was at last buried in the tomb of a rich disciple. He had no burial-place of his own. The apostle evidently refers not to any time of his earthly life, but to a pre-existent state before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, when alone it was possible to say of him that he was rich.

Though he was rich, yet he became poor. This was not an enforced poverty, to which he was compelled by the superiority of others; it was not the result of a squandering of his estate; it did not arise through a misfortune or a calamity of any kind; it was in no sense involuntary or constrained. It was voluntary poverty. It was an act of love when he became poor. He became poor not for his own sake or with a view to any gain on his part, but simply and alone "for your sakes," in order to the enrichment of the children of men by saving them from sin and evil and establishing them in righteousness and blessedness.

It is evident, therefore, that the apostle here

puts in striking antithesis a pre-existent state of heavenly richness with an earthly state of voluntary poverty.

He speaks of this gracious abandonment of wealth, and voluntary assumption of poverty on the part of Jesus, as an incentive to the Corinthians to follow his example and voluntarily undertake gifts and deeds of love.

The doctrine of the pre-existent wealth of Christ is accordingly incidental to his main purpose of exhorting the Corinthians, so far as practicable, to imitate the Lord. It presupposes a knowledge of this pre-existence of Christ on their part, and also further statements of this great fact on the apostle's part, in his previous instruction given to them. Such instruction we find in three passages of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, which it will repay us to study before we proceed further in the exposition of our text.

1. St. Paul says: "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, how that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual

rock that followed them; and the rock was Christ."[1]

The apostle here represents that Christ was the spiritual rock that followed the Israelites in their journey from Egypt through the Red Sea and the wilderness into the land of Canaan, that the Israelites at that time all drank of Christ, their spiritual drink, and they all ate of Christ, their spiritual meat. Their meat was doubtless the manna sent from heaven when they were about to die of hunger,[2] their drink the water which burst forth from the rock when they were about to perish from thirst.[3] This water and this manna were the gift to them of heavenly spiritual nourishment. These were given, according to the narrative of the Exodus, by the angel of the presence, who led Israel in all their journeys in the cloud, a pillar of cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night.[4] When St. Paul tells the Corinthians that Christ was the spiritual rock of which the Israelites drank in the Exodus, it was as much as to say that Christ was the pillar of cloud and fire, Christ was the angel of the cove-

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[1] 1 Cor. x. 1–4; Messiah of the Apostles, p. 99.
[2] Ex. xvi. [3] Ex. xvii. 1–7.
[4] Ex. xiii. 20–22, xiv. 19–31; Num. x. 34–36.

nant, Christ was the theophanic presence of God, described in ancient Hebrew history.

The theophanic presence of God here referred to was not an isolated fact in the history of Israel. This presence remained with Israel from the Exodus out of Egypt until the entrance into the Holy Land. The Angel of the Presence was the same theophanic angel who appeared to the patriarchs, to guide them in the great crises of their experience.[1] The theophanic cloud was the same which entered into the throne room of the tabernacle[2] and the temple, and, as the Glory of God, was enthroned above the cherubim; the Shekinah which remained as a permanent theophany in the temple until Ezekiel saw it departing from the temple when God had determined to discard the defiled and desecrated buildings.[3]

When St. Paul identifies Jesus with the theophanic Angel of the Presence, he identifies him also with the Shekinah and with all those theophanic manifestations of God which determine the history of Israel from Abraham to the Exile.

Therefore St. Paul tells the Corinthian Chris-

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[1] Gen. xvi. 7 *seq.*, xxii. 11–15, xxviii. 10–22, xxxii. 24–31.

[2] Ex. xl. 34–38. [3] Ezek i.–iii.

tians that Jesus Christ, before he was born in Bethlehem, had pre-existed in a heavenly state which extended far back in history to the time of Moses and the patriarchs; that Moses and the Israelites of the Exodus had been given spiritual meat and drink by Christ at that time, as Christians received spiritual meat and drink from the same Christ in the Lord's Supper; and that the theophanic angel and cloud were one and the same as Jesus Christ.

Accordingly we might say, recurring to the thought of our text, that Jesus was rich in his possession of the spiritual food and drink with which he richly blessed Israel of the Exodus, that he was rich in the theophanic glory with which he then manifested himself. He became poor in that he divested himself of theophanic glory and assumed the garb of a lowly workman, in that he dispossessed himself of the riches he had through so many centuries generously bestowed on Israel, and undertook the shame of a recipient of alms. He became poor by voluntarily becoming a travelling mendicant, a homeless wanderer, one rejected and despised as a pretender.

2. St. Paul tells the Corinthians, "I would have you know that the head of every man is

Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."[1]

This was in order to enforce his exhortation that the Corinthian women should be veiled. That "the head of the woman is the man" is based on the creation of the woman out of man according to the second chapter of Genesis. "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man: for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man."[2] Therefore, as the headship of the man over the woman is based on the order and dependence of the creation of the human pair, so we must think of the creation of man when the apostle says, in the same verse, "... the head of every man is Christ."[1] This is enforced in the context which says: "For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man."[3] Therefore Christ is the head of man as created, the head of the human race as its originator. He was the image of God after which mankind was created. It is evident that the apostle is here thinking of the story of the creation of mankind in the image of God given in the first

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 3; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 98 *seq.*

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9. [3] 1 Cor. xi. 7.

chapter of the Book of Genesis. God is represented as saying: "Let us make man in our image."[1] The image of God is here, therefore, either the image of a plurality of beings comprehended under the term God, or the plural is the Hebrew plural of intensity used commonly in nouns, but only here in a verbal form, implying that God sums up in Himself the supreme conception of the attributes involved in the terms employed. The most natural interpretation is to think of a plurality of beings, and then of God and the holy angels, all of whom are[2] in the eighth Psalm included, according to the Greek and other ancient versions and the authorized version, when it is said, man was made "a little lower than the angels," and who are certainly associated with God in the creation of the world in the Book of Job.[3] This form or image, which the ancient writer conceives as common to God and the holy angels, is here conceived by St. Paul as specially that of the pre-existent Christ. He is therefore conceived as the archetypal man, pre-

[1] Gen. i. 26.

[2] Psalm viii. See Messianic Prophecy, p. 147, and my exposition of the word אלהים in the New Hebrew Lexicon B.D.B.

[3] Job xxxviii. 7.

existent before the creation of man on the earth, supreme over humanity as the head of humanity, having himself no other head but God. This is in accordance with the conception of St. Paul that Jesus Christ was the "man of heaven," as distinguished from Adam who was of the earth. "It is written,[1] The first man Adam became a living soul (a living sensuous being). The last Adam a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural (sensuous); then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven."[2] If one thinks of the historic order, so far as this world is concerned, Jesus Christ is the last Adam, the second man, over against Adam, the father of the race, as first man. But if one compares the two as to nature, the first Adam was of the earth, earth-born and so essentially sensuous in his being: the second man was of heaven, heaven-born, and so essentially spiritual in his being. Therefore Jesus, though the second Adam as appearing subsequently to the first Adam in the history of this world, is yet of heavenly origin, and so primary to him as pre-existent in the heavenly state before

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[1] Gen. ii. 7.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 45–47.

creation. That is, when he entered this world he entered it as a being from heaven,[1] as one endowed with an essentially spiritual nature, over against the first Adam and all his descendants, who were earth-born and of essentially sensuous natures. And he was not only the heavenly man because pre-existing in heaven before he was born in this world, but he was also pre-existent before the creation of the first Adam, who was formed in the image of Christ as the ideal prototypal archetypal man.

There are some scholars who insist that all this is in the realm of the ideal, and that the pre-existence of Christ here taught is ideal pre-existence, that is, pre-existence not in reality as a real being, but as an idea or ideal in the plan and purpose of God before the creation of the world. This opinion is, however, untenable as a matter of interpretation; for the reason that the headship of Christ over humanity is co-ordinated with the headship of man over the woman and the headship of God over Christ in the same verse. The headship is the same kind of headship in the three instances, unless one can give some valid reason for a difference. There is no ground in

[1] Messiah of the Apostles, p. 117.

text or context on which to base any difference in headship in the three clauses. There is none in the teaching of St. Paul elsewhere. There is none in the New Testament. Therefore, as the headship of the man over the woman is a real headship, and the headship of God over Christ is a real headship, the headship of Christ over man must also be a real headship, according to the teaching of St. Paul in this passage. And inasmuch as the time of the thought is the time of the creation, there is no other alternative than to think of the real headship of Christ over man as at the time of creation, and so of his pre-existence as a real being, the divinely appointed head of humanity, the image of God prior to the creation of man, the model after which mankind was created.

If it be said, that St. Paul implies that Jesus was a heavenly man before he became an earthly man, we may say that this inference is not justified; for the reason that the apostle represents that Jesus Christ was the pre-existent head of humanity and the image of God after which humanity was constructed; but he does not say that Jesus was a man in heaven, but that he was a man who came from a pre-existent state in heaven.

In that pre-existent state, although all heavenly beings, possessed of intelligence and moral and religious natures, were after the image of God, Jesus Christ, pre-existent in the heavenly state, was in a special sense the image of God; and although mankind was created in the image of all the heavenly intelligences, God and angels, it was especially in the image of the pre-existent Christ that they were created; because God had constituted His Son not only in His plan of creation, but also in reality, the head of humanity, the mediator of the creation and government of mankind.

If the readers of our text in the Second Epistle recalled this thought of the pre-existence of Christ before the creation of man in the First Epistle, they might have seen in the riches that he possessed in his heavenly life his wealth as the head of humanity, and his rich endowments in spiritual nature as a heavenly being; and so have thought of his voluntary poverty as a divesting himself of his headship of the human race to become a humble subject in a nation trodden under foot by the proud Roman race; of his putting aside his headship even of Israel, though it was his birthright as an heir of David, and voluntarily becoming a servant of servants to his peo-

ple. They might have thought of this heavenly man, essentially spiritual in his nature, condescending to an earthborn existence, and of his spiritual nature encasing itself in a sensuous nature and clothing itself in the likeness of sinful flesh.

3. St. Paul tells the Corinthians, "For though there are that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him." Over against the many so-called gods worshipped among the nations there was to the Christian only "one God, the Father, of whom are all things." So, over against the many lords of the nations, Christians have only "one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things." The "*all things*" in both clauses is coextensive and unlimited. One cannot doubt that the "of whom are all things" refers to the creation of the world by God, and that He is represented therefore as the creator of all things. So, then, the clause "*through whom are all things*" also refers to the creation, and represents

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 97, 98.

Christ as the mediator of the creation. As the one God, the Father, is the Creator, "of whom," as the author, "all things" came into being; so the one Lord, Jesus Christ, is the mediator of creation, "through whom all things" came into being. Therefore Jesus Christ is conceived as the mediator of the creation, as participating in the creation of the world, and therefore as pre-existent at the creation of the world, and prior to the creation of the world.

The term *one Lord*, as used of Christ over against "one God, the Father" as used of God, is also significant, because of the fact that Lord was the well-nigh universal term of addressing God or speaking about God, both among the Hellenistic and the Palestinian Jews of the New Testament times. The writers of the New Testament after the resurrection of Jesus Christ apply Lord to Jesus Christ only, and no longer apply it to God who is called the Father, if not simply God.[1]

Jesus Christ, as the mediator of the creation of all things in this passage, as he was mediator of the creation of mankind in the other passage, is the one Lord of all things here, as he was the

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[1] Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 86, 87.

one Head of humanity there. This cannot be regarded as merely ideal pre-existence, if for no other reason, yet for this, that the parallel clauses "of whom are all things" and "through whom are all things" cannot one be real and the other ideal; they must both be the same, whether real or ideal. The creation of all things by God was certainly conceived as real; therefore the creation of all things through Christ must be real also.

If the Corinthian Christians had in mind this passage of the First Epistle when they read in the Second "he was rich," they might have thought of Christ's riches as the wealth of one who was the one mediator of creation through whom all things came into existence in this world of ours, and of the one Lord and sovereign of all these things, which originated through him. The creator of all things was the original source of all riches, — the sovereign Lord of all things is the owner of all riches, so that from this point of view they might have thought, not simply that he was rich, but that he was the richest of all, as the owner of all the wealth of the universe. The Messiah, when he voluntarily became poor, therefore, put aside his state as creator to become a creature. He divested himself of the lordship of all in order to become a servant of all. He

ceased to be the owner of infinite riches, in order to voluntarily taste the hardships and shame of the destitution of riches.

These three passages, teaching the pre-existence of Christ, had all been written by St. Paul to the Corinthians a few weeks before he sent them the Second Epistle with the words of our text. The apostle had already taught them that Jesus Christ pre-existed in the theophanic angel of the covenant in the days of the Exodus; that he was the head of the human race, the image of God after whom mankind was created; that he was Lord prior to the creation, the mediator through whom all things had been created. Therefore when he said in our epistle that Christ was rich, he was doubtless thinking of the riches he possessed in his heavenly state when he acted as the theophanic presence of God during the Old Testament, and as the mediator of the creation, and the model and archetype of mankind.

This idea of St. Paul of the pre-existent Christ as the mediator of creation, and the archetypal man, seems to be such a natural evolution of the teaching of Jesus as to the pre-existing Son of Man and Son of the Father that it seems quite probable that St. Paul learned in some way of this teaching of Jesus after writing the Epistle

to the Galatians and before writing the First Epistle to the Corinthians, possibly at the Council of Jerusalem itself, where he must have had considerable intercourse with those who had heard the Lord.[1] The Son of Man, what was he but the man who comprehended in himself all that was characteristic of humanity,[2] as a second Adam over against the first Adam, as the archetypal man? The Son of the Father who was the only mediator for making known the Father to men and angels,[3] what more natural than that he should be conceived as the primal image of God, and that the mediator of knowledge and of authority to work mighty deeds and execute judgment should also be conceived as the mediator of creation?

In these other passages from the First Epistle St. Paul taught the pre-existence of Christ, and said nothing explicitly about the incarnation; here the pre-existence is briefly stated in order to emphasize the nature of the incarnation. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich."[4] The incarnation was therefore essentially

[1] Acts xv.
[2] Sermon I., p. 29.
[3] Sermon II., p. 39.
[4] 2 Cor. viii. 9.

a self-impoverishment, the voluntary abandonment of a state and condition of wealth, and the voluntary entrance upon a state and condition of poverty. The purpose of it was gracious, in order to enrich mankind.

The incarnation was in fact a most sublime act of self-impoverishment. Jesus might have been born a Roman, he was born a Jew. His nation had a glorious history, that was in the distant past. It was now a poor and oppressed people. He might have been born in the family of the high-priest or of the king of the Asmonean line, but he was born of Joseph and Mary. Joseph was indeed the heir to the throne of David, and about him clustered all the glorious ideals of Messianic prophecy; but he was a disinherited exile from his native Bethlehem, and had become a poor carpenter, hiding in the obscurity of Nazareth from the jealous and unscrupulous Herodians. Jesus might have used his extraordinary ability and talents in order to become rich and exalted; he might have been a great Rabbi, chief of the rabbinical schools in Jerusalem, a leader in the Sanhedrim; for his wisdom was choicer than Solomon's or that of Jesus Ben Sira; his skill in Haggada and Halacha excelled that of the ablest rabbis of his time.

Never man spake as he spake. No magician ever did such wondrous deeds of healing and restoration to life, which would have enriched him beyond the dream of avarice had he been so disposed. But Jesus never received wages for his teaching or for his cures. He voluntarily chose a life of poverty. He persisted in a life of poverty. He preferred to receive alms rather than to accept wages. He gave freely everything he had. He accepted as freely any loving gift to him. He freely gave life to the nobleman's son.[1] He accepted from Mary the princely gift of the precious ointment.[2] He not only identified himself with the poor by giving up everything in order to be and always remain poor; he also identified himself with the poor by accepting alms from rich and poor alike. His purpose in this was not to discredit riches and honour poverty. If that had been his purpose the apostle could not have said, "that ye through his poverty might become rich."

He could never have enriched others, if to enrich them was to do them a moral injury. The poverty he assumed was a voluntary poverty in order to enrich others. The poverty he praised

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[1] John iv. 46–53.

[2] John xii. 1–8.

was the voluntary poverty of his disciples for his sake and for the sake of his kingdom and for the welfare of mankind; of those and those only who voluntarily became poor and voluntarily remained poor.

Jesus had to restrain himself to a most extraordinary degree in order to remain poor. Why, said the devil, should he suffer hunger when he could transform stones into bread? Why should he remain homeless to whom the throne of the world was open? Why should he suffer grief and pain who had authority over life and death? He satisfied the hunger of the multitude. He preferred to suffer hunger himself. He saved others from pain and sickness and death. Himself he did not save. He became poor to enrich us. He remained poor to enrich the people. He died poor to enrich mankind. He made it evident to the world for all time that the holiest of men, the wisest of men, the greatest of men, could live a life of voluntary poverty from the cradle to the grave. The pre-existent creator and Lord of all became incarnate in poverty, and so consecrated and glorified voluntary poverty as the state of Christian sainthood.

The incarnation, therefore, was an incarnation of grace. The apostle tells the Christians of

Corinth: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." They knew it in just this life of voluntary poverty which Jesus had lived for the enrichment of them and of others and of all mankind. They saw in the incarnate one the grace of God embodied in human face and form. Grace shone from his face, grace distilled from his touch, grace flowed from his lips, all gracious was his presence. The grace of God was made known in Christ Jesus. The incarnation was an incarnation in poverty. It was an incarnation of grace in poverty. St. Paul tells us that Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."[1] Jesus was the all-giver. He gave all. He kept back nothing. He gave all the time. He never declined to give good things to the needy. He was the incarnation of grace, because gracious gifts came forth from him spontaneously, freely, constantly, as from their original, perennial fountain source. It was his nature to be gracious, and he was gracious because the grace of God was incarnate in him. He was loving because he was the incarnation of love, the true Son of the Father, who "is kind to the unthankful and evil."[2] Jesus loved his enemies and perse-

[1] Acts xx. 35. [2] Luke vi. 35.

cutors, submitted to be robbed and scorned and slandered, without letting these indignities impair in the slightest degree the calm and rich and full outflow of grace from a person who was all love and all grace as the incarnation of God's grace and love for the enrichment of mankind.

V

THE KENOSIS

V

THE KENOSIS

Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. — PHIL. ii. 5–8.

THE Epistle to the Philippians was written some fourteen years after the Epistle to the Galatians, and some six years after the Epistles to the Corinthians. During that time St. Paul had an experience of communion with Christ in his work as an apostle which was unique. He had successively brought to Christ large numbers of Jews and Gentiles in Macedonia and Greece, in Asia and in Rome. He had made several extended missionary journeys, had suffered two long imprisonments, and numberless perils of every kind. We ought not to be surprised, therefore, that he had himself grown in Christian knowledge, and that he had advanced in his apprehension of the incarnation of our

Lord. In the Epistle to the Philippians it is as evident as in the Epistles to the Galatians and Corinthians that his mind went back from the enthroned Messiah to the Messiah of the Cross and his entrance into the world. But in the Epistle to the Philippians he takes a more extended and comprehensive view. He sees that the entrance of the Son of God into the world was something more than a mission from God, beginning when he was born of a woman under the Jewish Law; something more than the voluntary self-impoverishment of the rich Lord from heaven; it was a voluntary act on the part of the Son of God, who, pre-existing in the form of God, deliberately assumed the likeness of men, and who, though entitled by birthright to an equality with God, did not grasp it as a prize, but was minded rather to take the form of a servant and to suffer and die upon the cross, and so by the extremity of his humiliation win the name above all other names.

St. Paul conceives of the incarnation on the one side as the Son of God "emptying himself," and on the other side as his taking the form of a servant, and "being made in the likeness of men," and "being found in fashion as a man." The Greek word used here is κενόω. It is trans-

lated in the common version "made himself of no reputation," but more correctly in the Revised Version, "emptied himself." I shall use the term Kenosis as the technical term of this passage, not in the sense of any of the modern Kenotic theories, which seem to be altogether inadequate, but always in this sense of emptying himself.

In the Epistle to the Corinthians the apostle conceives of Jesus as the second Adam, as the "head of every man,"[1] as "the man of heaven," with the "life-giving spirit;"[2] in the Epistle to the Romans as the Son of God "in the likeness of sinful flesh,"[3] as the one man through whom we receive "the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness."[4] It is altogether probable, therefore, that the antithesis between the first Adam and the second Adam was in the mind of the apostle in our passage, when he says that Christ Jesus "counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." Our first parents were tempted to grasp the forbidden fruit that they might become as God.[5] Jesus Christ did not seize the

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 3; see p. 89.
[2] 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.
[3] Rom. viii. 3.
[4] Rom. v. 17.
[5] Gen. iii. 5.

prize of equality with God, even when it was within his grasp; but, on the contrary, deliberately emptied himself of the form of God and was made in the likeness of men.

It is also probable that St. Paul had in mind the servant of Yahweh of the Second Isaiah,[1] who was to interpose for his people and suffer and die for them. The Son of God in taking the form of a servant intended to appear among men as a prophet and to become a martyr.

The text indicates with sufficient plainness what it was that the Son of God emptied himself of. It was the form of God, because he was made in the likeness of men; it was his lordly rank as the Son of God, because he became a servant; it was the glory of his heavenly state, because he humbled himself to the shame of the cross.

1. The Son of God emptied himself of all the appearance and likeness of God; he filled himself with the likeness of men. He was born of woman as a little child. He grew in wisdom and stature. He worked as a carpenter to earn his livelihood. He waited until he was thirty years of age or more before he left his obscure life at

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[1] Isa. liii; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 356 *seq.*

Nazareth to begin his ministry. No one could suppose that the carpenter of Nazareth was anything more than a man. He lived as a plain man of the people. He had no wealth or property. He was not trained as a scholar. He had no rank or position. He was a man of the masses and not of the more favored classes. There was nothing in his appearance that would lead any one to suppose that he was any other than the man in whose fashion he was formed.

It is evident that, if the Son of God deliberately and for a holy redemptive purpose emptied himself of the form of God and assumed the form of a servant, and the likeness of men, he could not let his divine nature express itself through his humanity without destroying in a measure the likeness of man. He deliberately emptied himself of the form of God in order that he might appear to be man, and not appear to be God, during his ministry of redemption; and so his divinity found no expression through his human form and his earthly life, except near the close of his life in some glimmerings in the inner circle of the Twelve.

2. The Son of God, having life in himself, submitted himself to the conditions of human life and death. The Gospel of St. John tells us,

"For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in himself."[1] It was impossible that the Son of God should ever cease to have life in himself, or suspend the living of the life in himself. Jesus himself tells us: "Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again."[2] Thus Jesus had authority over his own life. He voluntarily submitted to the cruel death of the cross. No one could have crucified him without his consent. He voluntarily died; and he died with the full consciousness that he would live again whenever he chose to live. Of course, the life and death he is here speaking of are his human life and death as the Messiah; but it was only so far as he was conscious that he had a life in himself which could not be taken from him, that he could speak these words. Underlying the human life which he was to lay down and take again, was the divine life which persisted during the death of the human life, with the quickening power of the resurrection involved

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[1] John v. 26. [2] John x. 17, 18.

in it. This opens our eyes to understand the Kenosis of the divine life of the Son of God. The Son of God lived the divine life when he lived the human life, only the divine life did not exert itself so as to sustain or to preserve from death the human life, until the time had come for the Kenosis to cease and the exaltation to begin.

Attention has been called by some writers to the several miracles of Jesus, in which he raised the dead, as evidence that he did put forth the quickening energy of the divine life during his earthly ministry. But we should remember that raising the dead is attributed to Elijah and Elisha in the Old Testament, and that therefore it comes within the sphere of prophetic activity. We may conclude therefore that Jesus, though conscious of the divine life within him, deliberately refrained from putting forth the energy of that life, and intentionally limited himself in his earthly career to living the life of a man.

3. The Son of God emptied himself of the form of God in omnipresent relations in order to do the work of redemption in local relations in this world. It is beyond the scope of St. Paul in this passage to think of the relations of the Son of God to the universe. These come into

view in the Epistle to the Colossians where the work of reconciliation extends to the several orders of angels.[1] The Kenosis is conceived in its relation to the work of Christ Jesus for man in this world. So far as the Son of God has other relations to the universe, the Kenosis here mentioned does not apply. As the mediator of the divine government of the universe, in whom "all things were created" and in whom "all things consist,"[2] he continues in the form of God, at the same time as in the incarnation he empties himself of the form of God. He did not divest himself of his universal relations when he became man in special relations; he did not put away the attribute of omnipresence to the whole creation, when he limited his presence for the work of redemption to the land of Palestine and the form of Jesus of Nazareth.

4. The Son of God emptied himself of the attribute of omnipotence when he took the form of a servant. He limited his powers to such as a prophet might use. It is true he wrought many miracles, but so did Moses and the prophets. The miracles of Jesus no more prove his divinity

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[1] Col. i. 15–20. Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 210 *seq.*
[2] Col. i. 16, 17.

than the miracles of Moses prove his divinity. Indeed the Pharisees and the people regarded the miracles of Jesus as less than those of Moses, and as altogether insufficient to prove that he was the Messiah, to say nothing of his divinity.[1] There is nothing in the miracle-working of Jesus anywhere that cannot be explained as the work of a prophet. In fact, according to the Gospels, no one thought he was divine because of his miracles. At the most they were convinced that he was a prophet of God or the Messiah.[2] Shall we then suppose that Jesus was unconscious of divine power when he deliberately chose to limit himself to the use of human power under the impulse of God's Spirit? It is not necessary to think so. Jesus deliberately refrained from using his divine power. He intentionally submitted himself to violence and wrong without resistance. He himself illustrated his own principle of love by turning his cheek to the smiter and praying for those who crucified him. Nothing is more sublime than the scene of the betrayal when Jesus told St. Peter to put up his sword and healed the ear of Malchus which had been cut off, while he said that more than twelve legions

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[1] John vi. 30–31.

[2] Mark viii. 27–29.

of angels were at his call.[1] He testified under oath before the Sanhedrim that he was the Messiah and that they would see him enthroned at the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven;[2] and yet he submitted patiently while they spat on him and abused him.[3] No greater irony is known to the world's history than the real king of the Jews, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, crowned with thorns, clad in a purple robe, and holding a reed as sceptre, submitting to the mockery of a brutal soldiery.[4] Never did the Messiah put forth his divine power from the day of his birth until his death. We wonder how he could have so restrained himself and so emptied himself of his omnipotence. Wonderful self-restraint, self-humiliation beyond compare, long-suffering infinite, patience divine!

5. The question now arises, how far the incarnate Son of God emptied himself of divine wisdom, how far he could refrain from exercising his divine intelligence and be subject to human ignorance and error. So far as the divine wisdom is intuitive, and so far as it sums up all

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[1] Matt. xxvi. 51–53; Mark xiv. 47–49; Luke xxii. 49–53; John xviii. 10, 11.

[2] Mark xiv. 61–63.

[3] Mark xiv. 65.

[4] Mark xv. 16–20.

things in a holy ideal and a divine decree, it could not have been emptied from the consciousness of the Son of God when he became man. But it might have been kept secret; he might have abstained from its use, either for his own benefit or that of others, during his earthly ministry; and he might have so concentrated his attention in his human intelligence as to banish from his consciousness for a time his divine knowledge. It is necessary for us to suppose that Jesus had a human mind as well as a divine mind. The human mind of the child Jesus was as empty of content at the beginning as that of any other man child. Jesus is represented in the Gospel of St. Luke as growing in wisdom as well as in stature. The mind of Jesus had to be trained in the family, in the school, in society, at the carpenter's bench, and in the great world, as truly as the mind of any other child in Nazareth at the time. The human mind of Jesus was at first incapable of the contents of the divine mind, and could not appropriate these contents except gradually. When Jesus used the powers of human speech he spake human concepts from his human mind, he used human memory, even though he was sub-conscious of the possession of the divine mind of his divine nature.

The human mind was ignorant of all that it had not learned, and it was not possible for it to grasp in human conception the perfect knowledge of the divine mind of the Son of the Father. If Jesus had a double mind, we must recognize the difference between his human and his divine mind, no matter how docile and capable his human mind may have been. We cannot deny the human mind of Jesus without destroying his essential humanity. We may suppose, however, that he restrained his divine wisdom from instructing his human mind in order that his human mind might grow in knowledge as any other man's mind might grow, and that it might depend upon the divine Spirit and communion with the heavenly Father as any other man must depend. We may also think that the human mind could only gradually learn from the divine mind of the Son of God, as the human mind grew in the ability to use the memory and the reason. It is impossible that the divine mind dominated the faculties of the human mind, infusing divine conception and divine memory into it. For that would be a confusing the two minds, and mixing the two natures of the Son of God.

There can be no doubt of the wonderful wis-

dom and knowledge of Jesus as exhibited in his teachings, but there is nothing that cannot be explained from the point of view of the Messianic prophet speaking in the energy of the Spirit which he possessed beyond measure, and out of the communion with the Father which the Son ever enjoyed. There is no evidence that Jesus spake out from the wisdom of his divine nature, or that he spake his prophetic mind as it was taught of his own divine mind, except, possibly, a few passages in St. John's Gospel, spoken esoterically to the Twelve, near the close of his life.

We ought not to be surprised, therefore, that Jesus should confess that he did not know the day of his second advent.[1] As the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, in his divine mind, he knew it as really as the Father did. But when he spoke as a prophet, he spoke out of his human mind, as the divine Spirit taught him and inspired him, — he did not speak out of his divine mind. It is indeed difficult for us to understand how Jesus could be conscious in his divine mind of knowledge of an event, and yet conscious in his human mind of ignorance of an

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[1] Mark xiii. 32; Matt. xxiv. 36.

event; or that he could say that he did not know as man what he really knew as God; but we may understand it in part by analogy. Man has the power of concentrating the attention of his consciousness upon a definite area of knowledge, and of banishing from consciousness, for a season, that which is beyond that area. It is quite possible to be unable to know and to tell, at any particular time, what, under other circumstances and at other times, we know thoroughly well. Those who have the greatest power of concentration, those who are most gifted to solve the problems of life, know this well. It was, therefore, psychologically entirely possible for Jesus not to know as man in his consciousness what he knew as God in his subconsciousness. His divine knowledge might have been dormant in subconsciousness when he was conscious that he was speaking and thinking as a man. This is still easier to understand when we know that the faculties of conception and memory, upon which speech depend, must have been entirely independent in their activity in the human mind of Jesus from the action of the same kind of faculties in the divine mind, and that, therefore, he did not and could not conceive, remember, and speak as a man what he conceived and remembered as

God, without an instruction of the human mind by the divine mind, even in the one consciousness of Jesus himself. From this point of view it was quite possible that Jesus in his human knowledge may not only have spoken and acted in the limited area of the knowledge of his own age as to many things; but that he did not really know in human knowledge any more than he had been taught; and that in his human knowledge he was subject to the ordinary errors of the men of his times, except so far as he had learned to overcome them. This does not at all interfere with the doctrine that he was infallible in his teaching. For it is no more necessary to invoke the divinity of Christ to prove the infallibility of his doctrine, than it is to invoke divinity to prove the infallibility of Moses and the prophets, the evangelists and the apostles.

During his earthly ministry the Son of God refrained from using his divine wisdom; he refrained from letting the light of divine truth shine from his divine conception and memory into his human conception and memory, except so far as his human mind was capable of it. He emptied himself of it all in order that he might have the likeness of men in his knowledge, and the form of a prophetic servant in his wisdom.

6. What shall we say as to the moral and religious character of Jesus? Did he begin with a perfection of character? This is not the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which represents that he was made perfect by sufferings, and that he was tempted in all points as men are, yet without sin.[1] And Jesus tells us that he sanctified himself.[2] In fact Jesus grew in righteousness and holiness, and was perfected in faith and love, just as other men are, — by temptations, by trials, by sufferings, and by the exercise of his moral and religious faculties, in the practice of good and abstinence from evil. He was innocent and sinless at the beginning of his life, and he retained his innocence and sinlessness throughout his life, while he was ever as a son giving entire and perfect satisfaction to his Father. The perfect holiness and infinite love that were involved in the divine nature of the Son of the Father, were doubtless in his consciousness, and influenced in some measure the development of his human nature; and yet we are justified in supposing that the Kenosis extended even to this sphere, and that Jesus, in his human nature, grew in grace, holiness, and love, as any man could grow

[1] Heb. iv. 15, v. 8, 9. See Sermon VII., p. 156.

[2] John xvii. 19.

who lived in communion with God under the influence of the divine Spirit; and that the holiness of the divine nature of the Son of the Father did not constrain the free development, under temptation and discipline, of the moral and religious nature of the man Jesus. It was necessary, if he were to be head and norm of humanity, that the man Christ Jesus should by moral growth transform the possibility of sinning into an ethical impossibility of sinning.

Thus, in all the being and attributes of the Son of God, as pre-existent in the form of God, there was a self-emptying, a self-divesting, a self-renunciation of them so far as the form and appearance of the man Christ Jesus was concerned, which was not merely when the incarnation began, at the moment of his conception or birth, but which continued throughout the earthly life of Jesus; so that we have to think of a continual Kenosis, a continuous withholding of the form of God, and a continuous unfolding of the form of man, a continuous entering into the human nature of a knowledge of and life in the divine nature, a continuous entering into the divine nature of the experiences of the human nature; and all with a determined adherence of the Son of God to the likeness of the servant,

until the death of the cross, and the descent into the abode of the dead, brought the Kenosis to its end. During all that time of somewhat more than thirty years the Son of God was more and more incarnating himself in the man Jesus, as the man became more and more capable of the divine; he was all the time voluntarily and fully emptying himself of the form of God, withholding, refraining from, and abstaining from the use of his divine life and attributes, until the goal was at last reached of a perfect humanity. Just so soon as human perfection in obedience and love was reached and tested in his mediatorial death, the exaltation began, and the Messiah received the reward of his perfect obedience and perfect conformity to the divine ideal. Then the humanity had become fully capable of divinity, and was filled full of deity, and the Son of God became perfect humanity; the divine and the human came into perfect unity and harmony in the divine-human person of the Messiah, who was then exalted to equality with God, and given the name above every name, and was worshipped by all creatures as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

VI

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR SAVIOUR

VI

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR SAVIOUR

Suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel. — 2 Tim. i. 8–10.

THE Epistles to Timothy and Titus constitute the so-called Pastoral Epistles, because, in substance, they contain pastoral advice to these two companions and helpers of St. Paul. If they were written by St. Paul, they represent a Christian knowledge and experience some years further on than the Epistles of the Imprisonment, and it is necessary for us to assume that the apostle was released from his first imprisonment at Rome, and then, after a brief period of missionary journeys, was again arrested, and was imprisoned a second time, before he was finally condemned to death, and was executed.

Although this is the opinion of many scholars, and it seems to be altogether probable, there is not sufficient evidence to lift it above all doubt. Those modern scholars who deny his second imprisonment feel for the most part compelled to suppose that these epistles were written by disciples of St. Paul; but they disagree whether there were original letters of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, which constitute the nucleus of the present epistles, or whether they were altogether the work of disciples of St. Paul. In any case, these epistles represent a later stage of the school of St. Paul. This is certainly true of the doctrine of the incarnation. There are several references to the incarnation in these epistles; thus: "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."[1] "He who was manifested in the flesh."[2]

In this last passage as well as in the text, the incarnation is conceived as an epiphany or manifestation. Epiphany, in ecclesiastical usage in the Eastern Church, refers to the baptism of Christ when he was first manifested to men as the Messiah. But in the Western Church it usually

[1] 1 Tim. i. 15.

[2] 1 Tim. iii. 16; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 229 *seq.*

refers to the manifestation to the three wise men from the East, in connection with the theophanic star.[1] But there is also an ancient reference to Christmas Day as the great epiphany or birthday of Christ into the world.

The term epiphany is used in the New Testament, in both its nominal and verbal forms, at first for the appearance of Jesus Christ at his second advent to judge the world [2] and so commonly in the pastorals.[3] But in the First Epistle of St. Peter,[4] and the First Epistle of St. John,[5] it is also used for the first advent or the incarnation, as well as in the two passages already given from the pastorals. This change of usage, by which a term originally applied to the second advent was transferred to the first advent, and used indifferently of both advents, is quite significant, because it indicates a firmer and more assured grasp of the doctrine of Christ's heavenly pre-existence. The first advent is just as truly an appearance of the Son of God, and manifestation from a state of heavenly pre-existence, as his second advent will be an appearance and manifestation of one who has been in heaven from

[1] Matt. ii. 1–12.
[2] 1 Peter v. 4; Col. iii. 4.
[3] 1 Tim. vi. 14; Titus ii. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 1.
[4] 1 Peter i. 20.
[5] 1 John iii. 5, 8.

his resurrection to his second advent. In other words, the pastorals conceive of the incarnation and the second advent as both alike appearances or manifestations of the Son of God, coming out from a heavenly life with God into the world of man. The author of these passages was as firm in his doctrine of the real pre-existence of Christ before the incarnation, as he was of his mediatorial reign before the second advent. He regards both advents alike as episodes in the larger and more comprehensive life of the Son of God.

The term epiphany, which means appearing, appearance, manifestation, has associated with it the more concrete idea of light and brilliancy of appearance. It was used by the Greeks for the glorious manifestations of the gods; so it is appropriate to the second advent of our Lord which is a christophany with visible signs of light and fire and glory. So it is appropriate to the epiphany of the star of the wise men. The associations of the term, in classic Greek and in the ordinary New Testament usage, with theophanies, suggest that the author of the pastorals conceived of the incarnation as theophanic in character.

1. The epiphany of Christ in the incarnation was essentially a theophanic manifestation of the

pre-existent Son of God. This is tersely expressed in the first line of the credal hymn: "He who was manifested in the flesh."[1] That is, the Son of God, pre-existent in heaven, came out of the invisible world into the visible world, came forth from heaven to the earth, and he became visible, appeared in, and was manifested in flesh.

How can we reconcile this conception of the incarnation as a theophany, with the statement of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Philippians that the incarnation was a self-emptying? We have seen that the apostle there taught the putting away of the form and appearance of God, and of all rank and equality with God, and a hiding, a restraining, a keeping secret all that was divine, so as to live and act in the appearance of man, in the form of a servant. The conceptions do not coincide; they are from different points of view. The reason of it is that St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Philippians, emphasized the humiliation of Christ to the utmost, in its several stages, in order to give the antithesis of his exaltation as Lord of all; but in this epistle the humiliation of Christ is entirely out of mind; the writer is

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[1] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

thinking only of the great benefits brought into the world by Christ, and he conceives of these benefits as appearances or manifestations. We have found it necessary to think of a gradual Kenosis. It is still more necessary in the interpretation of the epiphany to think of a gradual manifestation, because that, which the writer specifies as manifestations of the epiphany, extends over the entire earthly life of Jesus; namely, the manifestation of the grace of God, the appearance of Christ as Saviour, and the bringing to light of life and incorruption.

The mind of St. Paul, if he wrote these words, or of his disciple, if he knew the mind of his teacher, was prepared by the statement in the Epistle to the Corinthians that Christ was in the theophanic angel of the Exodus[1] who led Israel up out of Egypt into the Holy Land. If Christ was this theophanic angel, the most important of all the historical theophanies, then this involves the conception that all the theophanic manifestations of the Old Testament were manifestations of the pre-existent Son of God, and that they all led on in several stages of preparation for the culminating act when the Son of God manifested

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[1] Sermon IV., p. 86.

himself in human flesh. The conception of the Kenosis does not exclude the conception of this theophanic manifestation.

The incarnation may be conceived as an appearance or manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh, the culmination of all theophanies, without the necessary implication that it was nothing more than a theophany. To think of the incarnation as a mission from God the Father does not exclude the later conception that the incarnation was a self-emptying of the form of God; the doctrine of the self-emptying is not inconsistent with the conception of the theophanic manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh. No more does the theophanic manifestation exclude the later and higher doctrines that the Son of God took hold of the flesh and blood of the children of Abraham,[1] and that he became flesh, and took human nature into organic union with himself as the eternal God-man.[2] The Holy Spirit was gradually training the Apostolic Church to understand the mystery of the incarnation.

The conception of the incarnation as the theophanic manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh, the culmination, realization, and fulfilment

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[1] Sermon VII. [2] Sermon IX.

of all theophanies, is true and suggestive so far as it goes; but it is not the complete and final statement of the doctrine. Those who build their faith on it alone, and deduce from it all its consequences, as if it contained all the truth and facts of the case, fall inevitably into error. Some of the early Christian sects are beacons of warning in this respect. But with this caution, it is sufficient at present to abide by the teaching of the pastorals, and reserve the higher doctrine for later study.

The pastorals teach that Jesus appeared or manifested himself in the flesh, and that this manifestation was essentially theophanic of the pre-existent Son of God.

2. The epiphany of Christ was a manifestation of the grace of God.

The grace of God was in the purpose of God before times eternal. Before all time, Christ was the predetermined bearer of the grace of God into the world of man. Prior to the promise of redemption to our first parents, prior to the first sin, and ages before those first things of the earth and man, before all the ages, God had a purpose of grace that, at a certain definite time in the history of the world, He would realize in His Son. This purpose was a secret purpose, it

was hidden in the decree of God, it was a mystery unknown even to angels, it was manifested for the first time in the epiphany of Jesus Christ. Thus the First Epistle of St. Peter represents that the Lamb "foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world — was manifested at the last of the times."[1] So the Epistle to Titus tells us: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present age."[2] So the Second Epistle of St. Peter represents all ancient prophecy as a lamp shining in a dark place; but in Jesus Christ the day of redemption dawned.[3] The whole history of Israel was a history of redemption through the grace of God. The entire Old Testament is a revelation of a plan and purpose of grace which was in process of development. That development came to a head in Christ and his gospel. The love of God the heavenly Father, a pre-existent, anticipatory love, an eternal purpose of grace, became manifest in Christ at the incarnation.

But this manifestation was only gradually

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[1] 1 Peter i. 20. [2] Titus ii. 11, 12. [3] 2 Peter i. 19.

made. It was not manifest except potentially at the birth of Christ, in connection with the theophanies which accompanied the birth according to the Gospel of the Infancy; but it began to be manifest in Christ, in his teachings, and in his works of love, and, above all, in his life and death of love. So that looking back over the life of Jesus in this world as a first advent, over against the future second advent, it was conceived in these pastorals as a manifestation of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, — a grace bringing salvation to all men, and instructing them in a godly life.

3. The epiphany of Jesus Christ was a manifestation of our Saviour. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.[1] So soon as he appeared in this world in human flesh, the Saviour of the world appeared. The great initial act of the incarnation was in itself a redemptive act upon which all other redemptive acts of the Son of God depended. But it was only the initial act which did not in itself, apart from the subsequent acts of the Son of God, manifest him to be a Saviour. It is true that the theophanic manifestation of the heavenly choir guided the

[1] 1 Tim. i. 15.

shepherds of Bethlehem to the manger where their Saviour was laid,[1] and the theophanic star led the wise men from the East to worship the infant king of the Jews;[2] but these theophanic manifestations were not manifestations in and from the flesh of the Messianic child. So Simeon saw in him the salvation prepared before the face of all people;[3] but he was in the Spirit, and was enlightened in his spirit by the divine Spirit; he did not see any manifestation of the Saviour in the flesh or from the flesh of the babe in his arms. These were all epiphanies leading to a recognition of Jesus as Saviour, not epiphanies of Jesus himself as Saviour. So at his baptism there was an epiphany or manifestation, in that the voice of the Father recognized him as the well-beloved Son, and the divine Spirit came upon him in the form of a dove, and he was thus made manifest as the Son of God, the Messiah.[4] But even here, so far as we can learn from the narratives, there was no manifestation going forth from Christ's own flesh; there was no appearance in his flesh that manifested that he was the Saviour of the world. Jesus manifested that he was the Saviour by his words of salvation to men, and

[1] Luke ii. 8–20.
[2] Matt. ii. 1–12.
[3] Luke ii. 25–35.
[4] Mark i. 9–11.

his acts of salvation for them during his ministry on earth; but especially when by his death and resurrection he manifested in christophany that he was the Saviour of the world. This is the view that the Epistle to the Hebrews takes where it says: "But now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."[1] Therefore, as we are obliged to interpret the manifestation of the Epistle to the Hebrews as a manifestation culminating in his sacrifice for sin, so we must interpret the manifestation of the Saviour of the pastorals as a manifestation of himself as Saviour in his work as Saviour, and so as virtually comprehending his entire earthly career. The manifestation of the Saviour was thus a gradual one, beginning with the birth, extending through the life, and culminating in the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus; just as the Kenosis was a gradual one in a similar way.

4. Jesus Christ in his epiphany manifested, or brought to light, life and incorruption. The Revised Version correctly renders the Greek word, *ἀφθαρσία*, by incorruption. The "immortality" of the Authorized Version leads to mis-

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[1] Heb. ix. 26.

understanding of the author's meaning. There is a difference between immortal life and a life that knows no corruption. Associated with this bringing of incorruptible life to light is the abolition of death. We are reminded of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, where the abolition of death, the last enemy, is attributed to the final work of the second advent.[1] Here the abolition of death is conceived as the manifestation of the first advent and the work of the incarnation. This is because it is in antithesis with the bringing to light of life and incorruption. We are also reminded of the man from heaven with the life-giving spirit of the Epistle to the Corinthians.[2] As I have said elsewhere: "It is quite true that the Messiah does not, in fact, become a quickening spirit to mankind until the resurrection of the dead at the Parousia; that he first took his position at the head of redeemed humanity as a heavenly, life-giving spirit when he rose from the dead and was enthroned in heaven; and that he first appeared to men as life-giving spirit when he rose from the dead. But in accordance with John x. 18, Christ must have been a life-giving spirit before his resurrection, or he

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 24–26. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 45. See Sermon IV., pp. 92.

could not have had authority to lay his life down and take it again. According to John v. 21, the Son had in himself, as the Son, the power to quicken whom he would. The life-giving power was not communicated to the Son when the Father raised him from the dead; but it belonged to the Son, as the Son of the Father. Accordingly, that principle of life must have entered the world with him. He became the Second Adam — the man from heaven — at his incarnation, just as he was born as the Messianic king. But he did not begin his reign until his ascension. He does not, in fact, become a life-giving spirit to men until the Parousia."[1] So also in the Epistle to the Hebrews the victory over death is attached to the first advent. "Since, then, the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."[2] We may also think of the words of the Epistle to the Romans: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in

[1] Messiah of the Apostles, p. 117.

[2] Heb. ii. 14, 15.

Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death."[1]

It is evident from these passages that different authors, and even the same authors in different writings, take somewhat different views as to the relation of the victory over death and the manifestation of incorruptible life, in the several stages in the work of Christ for our salvation. These differences do not involve inconsistencies of statement, but differences of point of view, all of which must be comprehended in any complete doctrinal statement.

In the pastorals the abolition of death and the manifestation of incorruptible life are attached to the manifestation of Christ at his first advent, that is, to the incarnation. The Son of God, when he was manifested in the flesh, manifested or brought to light an incorruptible life. His flesh was human flesh. It was in the likeness of sinful flesh, as the Epistle to the Romans expresses it; but it was not sinful flesh, and so was not itself under the dominion of sin and death. So his flesh was in the likeness of corruptible flesh, but it was incorruptible. The flesh of the incarnate Saviour knew no corruption. Being

[1] Rom. viii. 1, 2.

in the likeness of sinful flesh, he was subjected to the penalty of sinful flesh, and was condemned as guilty. Being in the likeness of corruptible flesh, he was beaten and put to death. But his flesh was as incorruptible as it was sinless.

This was a new manifestation to the world. All flesh of men prior to the flesh of Christ had been sinful and corruptible and under the dominion of death. His flesh was a flesh that sin could not control or corrupt, and that death could not conquer. The incorruptible life of the Son of God in the flesh was not here the divine life of the Son of God; it was the human life in the flesh, in which the Son of God manifested himself. There is, therefore, no necessity of corruption and death in human flesh; that corruption is due to the dominion of sin and death. The man Christ Jesus, living entirely apart from the dominion of sin and death, and entirely in communion with God, lived a normal, incorruptible life in the flesh, and so for the first time in history brought life and incorruption to light. This was a fact at the beginning and at every stage in the life of Jesus; but it reached its culmination in the resurrection when the flesh of Jesus Christ came forth incorruptible into the life of the enthroned and glorified Redeemer.

This manifestation of incorruptible life was also a manifestation which enlightens mankind with the light of life. Jesus was the resurrection and the life to all who believed in him, so soon as they entered into communion with him. As Jesus said, according to the Gospel of St. John: "He that heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life."[1] This is so far as the essential spiritual life of the regenerate man is concerned. But the full accomplishment of the abolition of death and the enjoyment of incorruptible life can only be at the final resurrection. As says the Epistle to the Philippians: "For our commonwealth is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."[2] Then first, according to the Epistle to the Corinthians: "This corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal

[1] John v. 24.

[2] Phil. iii. 20, 21.

shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."[1]

The Epiphany of Christ Jesus is thus a theophanic manifestation of the pre-existent Son of God, a manifestation of the grace of God, a manifestation of our Saviour, and a manifestation of incorruptible life. This manifestation began when Jesus Christ was born in human flesh; but it only gradually overcame the darkness of this world, shining forth more and more during the earthly life of Jesus, and rising into full noontide glory at the Resurrection.

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54.

VII

MADE LIKE UNTO HIS BRETHREN

VII

MADE LIKE UNTO HIS BRETHREN

Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily not of angels doth he take hold, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham. Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. — Heb. ii. 14–17.

THE Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by St. Paul, as many have supposed, but by a Christian from Alexandria, like Apollos. The author represents a different point of view of Christ and his salvation from that of St. Paul; and indeed a much later one, which did not emerge until subsequent to the death of the apostle. We should expect, therefore, another view of the incarnation, and a later and further development of the conception of the entrance of the Son of God into the world.

We have seen that the earliest conception of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians, was that the incarnation was a mission from the Father, that the more advanced conception of the Epistle to the Philippians was a Kenosis or emptying himself of the form of God, taking the form of man. In the pastorals, the conception was of an epiphany or theophanic manifestation of the Son of God from heaven in human flesh. The Epistle to the Hebrews now conceives that the relation of the Son of God to human flesh was much closer than an epiphany or manifestation in it; the Son of God shared in flesh and blood in common with all the children of men; he partook of the same flesh as other men, he took hold of the seed of Abraham to help them, he was in all things made like unto his brethren.

1. The Son of God did not take hold of angels, but he took hold of the seed of Abraham. The taking hold here is the appropriation, the assumption of the nature and being in order to help them. He did not take hold of angels; but he did take hold of the children of Abraham to help them. The Epistle to the Hebrews conceives of the pre-existent Son of God in a more comprehensive and thoroughgoing way than any previous epistle. The nearest to it is the Epistle to

the Colossians. The Epistle to the Colossians represents that all things were created through the Son of God and unto him; the Epistle to the Hebrews, that he is the appointed heir of all things, through whom God made the ages. The Epistle to the Colossians represents the Son of God as the image of the invisible God; the Epistle to the Hebrews, that he is the effulgence of the divine glory and the very image of his substance. The Epistle to the Colossians[1] represents that in the Son of God all things consist; the Epistle to the Hebrews, that he upholds all things by the word of his power.[2]

Thus the Son of God prior to his incarnation was the mediator of the creation and government of the world, the appointed heir and sovereign of all creatures. He was higher than the angels and archangels; he was above every order and rank of created beings; he was the one only son and heir of the Father, who represented God to the entire creation. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews conceives of the Son of God in his unique exaltation looking down the rank of beings he had created. Which of these ranks shall he lay hold of in his purpose of redemption?

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[1] Col. i. 12–22; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 210 *seq.*

[2] Heb. i. 1–14; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 243 *seq.*

Shall he lay hold of the archangels, of the thrones, the principalities, the dominions, the powers, — those several ranks of angels mentioned in the epistles? Or shall he lay hold of the lowest rank of angelic beings, the ordinary ministering angel? This possibility is mentioned only to be rejected. In his theophanic manifestation to the patriarchs he had manifested himself in angelic forms, and so especially in that most striking of all theophanies, the Angel of the Presence, who led Israel up out of Egypt to the Holy Land. Why not take the form of an angel and appear among men as an angel from heaven? Such an incarnation would be welcomed by Israel. It was somewhat in accordance with their expectations. But as man was at his creation made a little lower than the angels, so the Son of God descends below the rank of the angels to the rank of a son of man, and among the sons of men selects the children of Abraham and lays hold of that which is common to the seed of Abraham.

This does not imply that the Son of God in his incarnation limited his purpose of salvation to the seed of Abraham, which he took to himself; for the Epistle to the Hebrews regards Christ's salvation as for the race of man; and the Epistle to the Colossians represents the angels as sharing

in the reconciliation of Christ.[1] It is rather that the Son of God descends down through the orders of angels, below the rank of angels, to the rank of man, and the rank of a man of a people in bondage, in order that, as he reascended the ranks of creatures, he may redeem them all.

2. The Son of God partook of flesh and blood. He shared with his brethren in flesh and blood that he might share with them in sufferings and death. He tasted sufferings and death in order that he might, in his own experience, battle with them and overcome them; for he was waging a holy war against the devil, the supreme power of evil, for the redemption of mankind. We have seen in the Epistle to the Philippians that the Kenosis extended to the death of the cross,[2] and in the pastorals that the epiphany of Christ abolished death and brought life and incorruption to light.[3] Here the author looks deeper into the relation of Christ to the flesh and the consequences of his death in the flesh. The flesh of the Son of God was assumed not merely for purposes of manifestation. He assumed the flesh as a flesh sensitive to pain and suffering, which he undertook to experience in his work of salvation.

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[1] Messiah of the Apostles, p. 216.

[2] Sermon V., p. 123. [3] Sermon VI., p. 135.

He partook of human blood, that he might experience its pulsations and pour it forth voluntarily, in the wounds of the scourge and the cross. He tasted death for every one; that is, he went through the same experience of death as other men for their salvation. It is altogether probable that the experience was much more bitter to him than to other men. For the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that: "In the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." [1] This is probably in reference to the scene in Gethsemane described by St. Luke: "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." [2]

There can be no doubt, therefore, that Jesus suffered extraordinary agony in the contemplation of his impending death. He agonized in prayer to the Father that if it were possible he might be spared the experience. But it was not possible. In no other way could he accomplish

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[1] Heb. v. 7, 8.

[2] Luke xxii. 44.

the death-struggle with death for the salvation of men. So the narrative of the crucifixion makes it evident that Jesus suffered a most cruel, painful, and shameful death. The officers of the Sanhedrim spat on him and beat him. The soldiers crowned him with a crown of thorns, and smote him with the reed sceptre, and abused him in every way. He was scourged by command of Pilate, and his back was scarred with the stripes. He was so weakened by this cruel treatment that he was physically unable to bear his cross to the place of crucifixion. He was then nailed to the cross, and hung there in pain and deadly anguish, amidst mockery and abuse, until he died. His agony was so great that it seemed as if God the Father had forsaken him. It would be difficult to find anywhere in human history a more bitter experience in death than Jesus the Son of God suffered. At the time when he thus suffered, he had become perfect in his human nature by obedience. His human nature had become capable of the divine. The human nature and the divine nature of the Son of God had harmonized and become unified in his divine-human personality. Therefore it was in a full knowledge and consciousness of his divinity that he suffered this terrible experience of death.

Being himself the resurrection and the life, having in himself divine life of which he could not be deprived, he yet voluntarily submitted to all this experience of pain, agony, shame, and death. Death did its worst with him. The devil, who had the power of death, put forth all his power in testing him and trying him to the uttermost. The devil exhausted himself in the death of the Son of God, so that when the Son of God rose from the state of death, the devil was overcome, stripped of his power and dominion, not only for the Messiah himself, but for all those who belong to the Messiah. So the Book of Revelation represents the Messiah as himself saying: "I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades" (the abode of the dead).[1] The power of the devil having been destroyed so far as Christ was concerned, and death abolished by the resurrection of Christ, an entirely new face was put on the destiny of humanity. For the Son of God gained his triumph not for himself. He became incarnate for the redemption of mankind. He won victory over death and the devil for all his brethren.

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[1] Rev. i. 17, 18.

Therefore they have nothing more to fear from death or the devil. They are no longer liable to the dominion of death; they have been delivered from the bondage of the dread of it. Life and incorruption have been brought to light, — life, everlasting life in union and communion with Jesus Christ. The Son of God partook of human flesh and blood in order that, through his experience of agony in the flesh and the shedding of blood, he might deliver mankind from the agony of the dread of death and the dominion of the sovereign of death.

3. The Son of God was made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest.

We have seen in the Epistle to the Philippians that the Son of God was made in the likeness of men;[1] so here he was made like unto his brethren. There it was the likeness of men over against the form and appearance of God. Here it is like unto the brethren in sharing with the brethren in a common likeness. All that was common to the brethren, Jesus shared with them. The Epistle to the Hebrews lays great stress upon human experience. Thus, as we have seen,

[1] Sermon V., p. 108.

Jesus was perfected by sufferings. He was voluntarily poor; he had not where to lay his head; he was without money or property of any kind. He suffered hunger and thirst, as in the temptation in the wilderness. He suffered hardship and exposure. He was in peril of death when he was born in Bethlehem; and in constant peril of arrest, and condemnation to death, during his brief earthly ministry. All this was a hard discipline, a life of trial and suffering. In most men such an experience would embitter them, make them sour and melancholic, censorious and pessimistic. But Jesus was perfected by his sufferings. They were a divine discipline that trained his pure childhood and innocent youth into the perfect righteousness of right conduct, and of holy love as a Son of God.

The likeness of Jesus with his brethren is chiefly viewed in the Epistle to the Hebrews as a likeness of temptation, as a moral discipline in order to perfect the Messiah as the great high-priest. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."[1] "For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our

[1] Heb. ii. 18.

infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."[1]

The apostle here teaches that Jesus was like his brethren in all points of temptation, and that he differed from them alone in the results of the temptation. They were sinful, he was without sin.

Temptation is ordinarily assigned to three sources, — the world, the flesh, and the devil.

(*a*) The statements of the New Testament present to us a conflict between Jesus and the devil which extends from the temptation in the wilderness, before the public ministry began, until the struggle on the cross and in the abode of the dead, with the final victory which was in the resurrection. It is safe to say that no human being has ever had to sustain such a severe trial and intensity of temptation by the devil as Jesus experienced. He overcame it all, and remained sinless, triumphantly righteous, and loving in self-sacrifice.

(*b*) The life of Jesus also makes it plain that he had to sustain a terrible strain of temptation from the world. The world was against him as it was never before against any man. He had

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[1] Heb. iv. 15.

no help from the world. He lived a life of abstinence from all that the world regards as attractive and desirable. The world was his enemy: in the Jewish authorities, in the royal house of Herod, and in the Roman governor; even in the populace, who cried out against him, "Crucify him, crucify him." The whole world conspired to urge him to change his teachings and abandon his career under the penalty of persecution and death. He tells his experience to his disciples in the Gospel of St. John: "If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."[1]

(*c*) As for the temptation that arises from the flesh, it is difficult to see how Jesus could have been in all points tempted like his brethren. So far as the trials of the flesh are concerned, which come from hunger and thirst, from pain and sorrow, from bereavement and want, from hard-

[1] John xv. 18–20.

ships and all the physical infirmities that flesh is heir to, the New Testament gives us sufficient warrant for saying that Jesus endured them all. He was indeed the great suffering prophet of the Psalter and the Second Isaiah. As St. Matthew tells us: He "himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases."[1] No man ever lived who suffered more trial in the flesh or was more tempted by suffering than Jesus Christ.

But mankind have other temptations in the flesh which it is difficult, if not impossible, for us to attribute to Jesus. St. Paul tells us that there is in man an inherited taint, defilement, or habit of sin. "I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing."[2] On the one hand, if we suppose that Jesus was free from this hereditary taint, that he felt no sinful impulses in his flesh, and that, though he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, his flesh was not sinful as the

[1] Matt. viii. 17.

[2] Rom. vii. 14–18.

flesh of his brethren; then how could the author of the epistle say that he was tempted in all points like as we are?

Accordingly some great and good men have insisted that Jesus must have experienced the same tendencies to sin in his flesh that all other men experience in their flesh, that he really shared in sinful flesh, though he never yielded to its impulses, and never for a moment was defiled by an evil thought or desire.

On the other hand, if we hold to the Church doctrine of original sin, it is difficult to see how we can say that Christ was sinless, if he really shared in sinful flesh. Accordingly the Church has always insisted that Christ had no share in the original sin of the race, no part in the inherited tendency to sin in human flesh born with us into the world.

Before we enter into this difficult question, it is important to say that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews did not consider it. It was not within the scope of his discourse. There is nothing in this epistle to indicate that he held to that view of original sin which is stated in the Epistle to the Romans. It is agreed among scholars that St. Paul's view of the moral relations of human flesh is not to be found, either explicitly

or implicitly, in this epistle. The author limits himself to infirmities of the flesh which are the source of trials and temptations, but does not conceive of these as moral infirmities. Such physical infirmities of the flesh Jesus shared with all men. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities because he shared them, and was in all points tempted like as we are.[1]

It is true that contrasted with the high-priests under the law, who were appointed having infirmities, Jesus Christ was perfected for evermore.[2] But this does not imply that Jesus did not have infirmities during his earthly life. He was perfected for evermore in that he conquered his infirmities and was so, by temptation in his infirmities, made perfect. He in his earthly discipline became holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and so was made higher than the heavens,[3] whereas those other high-priests in their infirmities fell into sin under temptation, and so had to sacrifice for their own sins as well as the sins of the people.[4]

It is evident, therefore, that we have no right to interpret "the all points," in which Jesus was

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[1] Heb. iv. 15.
[2] Heb. vii. 28.
[3] Heb. vii. 26.
[4] Heb. vii. 27.

tempted like as we are, beyond the physical infirmities of the flesh which alone the author of this epistle had in mind. The question which troubles us is, therefore, a question which arises from a combination of the Pauline doctrine of original sin with the thought of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Jesus was made like his brethren.

At the same time it is necessary to consider the question, for it is a very important one. We must, however, make one other preliminary statement, namely, that sin is not a natural and necessary characteristic of human flesh. Although it is an inheritance of the children of the first Adam, it entered into the world and into human flesh for the first time, according to St. Paul, after the creation of human flesh, by a single act of sin by our first parents. It is not normal to human flesh; it is abnormal. There was no inherent necessity, therefore, why the Second Adam should assume sinful flesh when he assumed human flesh. He assumed what was normal to humanity, and so became more truly the normal man, the Second Adam, than if he had assumed abnormal sinful humanity. So far as it was necessary to the work of salvation, he assumed also all the abnormal situations and

circumstances and consequences of fallen humanity; but it was not necessary that he should inherit the abnormal moral character and relations of fallen mankind. He came rather as the Second Adam to renew and save the human race by presenting an entirely normal man, pure and innocent at the beginning, and sanctifying himself and attaining perfect righteousness by overcoming all temptation, doing all the holy will of God, and exceeding and transcending all law by a life of love and a death of self-sacrifice, and so fully and completely revealing the Father's love for mankind in a faithful and loving child of the Father, in human flesh and blood. It was just this likeness to the brethren, in every respect but sin, which made him competent, so soon as he had perfected himself, and shown himself triumphant over all sin and evil, over death and the devil, to be the everlasting high-priest of mankind, perfect man and so the perfect surety, guarantor, and surrogate of humanity in the presence of God, and, at the same time, the all-loving Son of God, the guarantor of full salvation to all who will follow him in fidelity and love.

There is a seeming defect in the absence from the man Christ Jesus of any temptations arising from his own sinful flesh; and there is in the

thought that, if he experienced such temptations and conquered them, he accomplished a grander act of heroism than in the victory over all physical frailties and temptations from without. But, on the other hand, the necessary consequence of that thought, that there were moral frailties in the flesh of Jesus at the beginning, would so seriously impair his moral perfection that he would be after all less innocent than the first Adam before the fall, and less perfectly the norm of humanity. Jesus shared in human flesh and blood for the salvation and the perfection of our race; he shared in all that belongs to humanity as such; he undertook all the trials and temptations that were necessary for his sympathy and help as the great high-priest of our race; but he could not undertake anything morally abnormal, or religiously inadequate, without in a measure making his salvation inadequate and abnormal.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews conceived of the Son of God as sharing in human flesh and blood, partaking of human nature, as being made like the brethren, not merely for his life in this world, but for a permanent heavenly ministry, as a great high-priest after the order of Melchizedek, who continuously at the right hand of the Father interposes for mankind in his

human flesh and blood. He has a fellow-feeling for us all, in our infirmities, our temptations, and our trials. He shares with us his victories over sin and death and the devil. His flesh is the veil through which we enter the Holy of Holies of the Father's love. His blood ever remains on the holy altar, washing away all the guilt of our sins. His flesh ever guarantees our eventual righteousness through the perfect work he is carrying on in us. His flesh and blood are ever on the altar-table of the Church, as the food and drink of everlasting life.

VIII

THE ADVENT OF GOD

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And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent unto him from Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed, I am not the Messiah. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No. They said therefore unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet. — JOHN i. 19–23.

THIS narrative of the Gospel of St. John sets forth distinctly what St. John the Baptist thought of himself. He knew that he was none of the Messianic persons predicted in Old Testament prophecy, and anxiously awaited and longed for by the Jews in the New Testament times; but he also knew that he was the herald of the Lord predicted in the fortieth chapter of the Book of Isaiah.

The prophet, in glowing terms and in graphic and picturesque language, depicts the advent of

God. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is seen marching across the Syrian desert into the holy land, and to the royal city, Jerusalem. The herald precedes him, calling not only upon man, but also upon all nature, to prepare his way. Zion and Jerusalem take up the message, and proclaim it to all the cities of Judah: "Lo, your God is coming." Before him all the crooked places straighten themselves; all the rough places smooth themselves out; every hill and mountain humbles itself; every valley and wady raises itself.

So, according to another passage,[1] the wilderness is glad, and the solitary place rejoices, for waters break forth, and streams and lakes appear on every side. The sandy, barren soil is covered with fresh grass and brilliant flowers of every kind; all the glorious flora of Sharon is there, sweet-scented shrubs of Lebanon, the stately forests of Carmel, and the majestic cedars of Lebanon.

"The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

"Behold, Adonay Yahweh cometh as a Strong one, His arm ruling for Him.

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[1] Isa. xxxv.

Behold his wage is with Him and His recompense before Him.

He feedeth His flock like a shepherd, He gathereth the lambs with His arm,

And in His bosom lifteth them, gently leadeth those that suckle their young."[1]

There can be no doubt that the prophet is here depicting a divine advent: that the herald is the herald of the advent of God; and therefore, when St. John the Baptist tells the delegation of the Pharisees that he is the herald of this advent, he tells them that he is the herald of the advent of the Lord God.

But did St. John the Baptist understand that Jesus Christ was God? We cannot say this. He bears witness to him that he was the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world":[2] in other words, the Servant of Yahweh of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, upon whom the Lord laid the iniquity of us all; who bore the sin of many, who was brought as a lamb to the slaughter and offered himself as a trespass offering. He also testified that Jesus was mightier than he, whose shoe-latchet he was unworthy to unloose, and that he would baptize with the Holy Spirit.[3]

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[1] Isa. xl. 10, 11; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 375 *seq.*

[2] John i. 29. [3] Mark i. 7, 8.

But the Servant of the Lord of the Second Isaiah was not the Lord of the Second Isaiah. It is evident that St. John the Baptist was somewhat perplexed about Jesus, for he sent some of his disciples to ask Jesus: "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?"[1] Jesus refers him to his preaching the gospel to the poor, and to his miracles of mercy, as the evidence of what he was. These, again, are just those things that are predicted of the Servant of Yahweh in Isaiah, chapter sixty-one. And accordingly St. John the Baptist died his martyr death convinced that Jesus was the prophetic Servant of the Second Isaiah, but unable to see how Jesus was related to the advent of Yahweh Himself, of which he was the divinely appointed herald.

This situation of affairs ought not to surprise us, for the Messianic idea of the Old Testament is exceedingly complex. There is variety enough in the ideals, but there is no unity. This appears in the questions put by the Pharisees to St. John the Baptist: "Art thou the Messiah? Art thou Elijah? Art thou the prophet?"[2] The same appears in the words of Jesus to the Twelve. He asked his disciples: "Who do men say that

[1] Matt. xi. 3.

[2] John i. 19–28.

I am?" And they said, "Some John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Messiah."[1]

The perplexity of St. John the Baptist bears witness to the same thing. There are in the Old Testament two distinct lines of the Messianic idea, — the one predicting the advent of God for redemption and judgment, the other predicting the advent of a redemptive man. The redemptive man is conceived sometimes as the Seed of the Woman, or Seed of Abraham, as the Lion of Judah, as the Second Moses, as the Son of David, the Son of God, the Messiah, as the Martyr Servant, as the Priest King, as the Martyr Shepherd, as the Son of Man.[2] It is impossible to combine these in any unity so far as the Old Testament is concerned. And there is not the slightest indication that there is any coincidence of the line of the divine advent with the line of the advent of any of these human Messiahs. It is as if a master artist had conceived a great ideal whose

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[1] Mark viii. 27–30; Matt. xvi. 13–20; Luke ix. 18–21; Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 93 *seq.*

[2] Messianic Prophecy, pp. 476 *seq.*

execution he had committed to many hands besides his own. Each artist, working under the direction of the master, has to depict his own special ideal, — one the suffering Servant, another the glorious King, still another the martyr Shepherd, and yet another the Lion of Judah, further on, another, the Priest King of the order of Melchizedek, and still further on, another, the Son of Man; and intermingled with these, many are depicting the various representations of the advent of God. These are all kept apart. The work has progressed so far that all the separate ideals are there in outline, and some of them in all the glory of oriental color. But when we have taken the survey of the whole, there is a lack of harmony; there is no unity; there is a surprising lack of finish. It is not to be wondered at that the Jews in the time of our Lord were troubled, that St. John the Baptist was perplexed, that even the Twelve could understand only in part; for none but the Master, none but he could give unity and harmony and finish to the representations, and show by his own life and work that all the lines of the Messianic ideal were so many tracings of that wondrous variety which found its unity and harmony in his glorious person.

When now we turn from the Gospel of St. John to the Synoptic Gospels, we find that the very words which are put by St. John in the mouth of St. John the Baptist are written by St. Mark, St. Matthew, and St. Luke as their own words. Thus St. Mark says: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God. Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my Messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight; John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins."[1]

The Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke adopt these words from the Gospel of St. Mark with slight modifications which do not in any respect affect their essential meaning.[2] The use of these words by these evangelists as their own testimony, puts them in an entirely different light from the use of them by St. John the Baptist as his testimony; for St. John the Baptist died a martyr death some considerable time before the life work of Jesus had reached its completion;

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[1] Matt. iii. 3; Luke iii. 4–6.

[2] Mark i. 1–4; Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 64 *seq.*

whereas all these evangelists gave their testimony many years after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, looking back upon his entire earthly career and also upon the apostolic witness as to Christ until their own time. St. Mark writes under the influence of St. Peter, St. Luke under the influence of St. Paul, — both in the city of Rome, some time subsequent to the martyr death of the two chief apostles ; and St. Matthew's Gospel represents the opinion of the Eastern Christians as to the person and life of Christ. The question, therefore, whether Jesus was identified with Yahweh, the God of the advent of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, assumes an entirely different situation. When St. Mark tells us that St. John the Baptist was the herald of the advent of Yahweh, at the beginning of his Gospel, what else can he mean than that Jesus Christ, whose redemptive life is the theme of his Gospel, was that very Yahweh ? St. Mark knows of no other advent of Yahweh in his Gospel. He knows of a second advent of Jesus as the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven for the judgment and redemption of the world ; but even if we suppose that he thought of a specifically second advent of the Lord, it is difficult to see how he could represent St. John the Baptist as the herald

of that advent, when the first advent had intervened, and also the death, resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Christ, and the organization and grand progress of his church in the world. And even then this second advent is the advent of the Son of Man, the divine advent being so much in the background that it is evident that the advent of Christ has taken the place and the importance of the divine advent of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Furthermore, St. Mark not only represents St. John the Baptist as the herald of Yahweh of the Second Isaiah, but he also presents him as the messenger of the Lord of the prophet Malachi, where the prophet says: "Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the angel of the covenant whom ye delight in. Behold, he cometh, saith Yahweh Sabaoth. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap." [1] The prophet here represents that the theophanic angel of the covenant, who was the guide of the patriarchs and of Israel of the

[1] Mal. iii. 1, 2; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 473 *seq.*

Exodus, and who had occupied the ancient throne room of the tabernacle and the temple as the permanent theophany, the Shekinah, — that this theophanic angel would again suddenly return to the temple, and that his advent would be preceded by a messenger, and that when he came there would be a judgment of fire. When St. Mark represents St. John the Baptist as this messenger, what else can he mean than that Jesus is the angel of the covenant? It is true that the advent of the angel of the covenant is for judgment, and that this judgment is referred by Jesus to his second advent; but this is due to the fact that prior to the two advents they are combined in prophecy in the unity of one dispensation. But, on the other hand, it is characteristic of the teaching of Jesus that the Father has committed all judgment to the Son, and that the Son of Man, the Messiah, takes the place in the judgment that God is represented as taking in the Old Testament Scriptures. And so this is another evidence that Jesus is conceived as Yahweh, the Lord of the judgment of the Old Testament.

Furthermore, St. Mark writes with a full knowledge of what St. Paul had written many years before on this subject. As we have seen, St. Paul identifies Jesus with the Angel of the

presence of the Exodus.[1] We ought to expect, therefore, that St. Mark would identify him with the same Angel of the covenant whom the prophet Malachi predicted as suddenly coming to his temple.

So when St. Luke, using the language of St. Mark, speaks of St. John the Baptist as the herald of the advent of Yahweh, the God of Israel, he speaks as the beloved physician, the pupil of St. Paul, who carries on the work of the great apostle to the Gentiles after his martyr death at Rome. What else can we think than that he meant to teach the same doctrine as to the divinity of Christ which St. Paul teaches in his epistles, when he represents that Jesus Christ was pre-existent before he entered this world as the mediator of the creation of the world, as the head of the human race,[2] as equal with God,[3] as the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, in whom all things were created, all things having been created through him and unto him, who was before all things and in whom all things consist,[4] who also, when he entered

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[1] Sermon IV., p. 85.

[2] Sermon IV., p. 89.

[3] Sermon V., p. 108.

[4] Col. i. 12–20; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 210 *seq.*

the world, came as an epiphany, or manifestation of God.[1]

Moreover it is altogether probable that St. Luke writes with the full knowledge of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed St. Luke is in some respects so kindred in his style and thought to the author of that epistle, that some scholars, though I think wrongly, have supposed that he was the author. The author of this epistle represents Jesus as the effulgence of the Father's glory, the very image of His substance, through whom also He made the ages, and who upholds all things by the word of His power ; and he also identifies him immediately with Yahweh, the God of Israel, in several passages which he quotes.[2]

Therefore, with the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, and the identification of Christ with Yahweh, the God of the Jews, in the writings of St. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews behind him, as taught and established in the school of St. Paul to which he belonged, we can hardly interpret St. Luke here in any other way than as regarding the advent of Jesus Christ, when he came into the world, as the advent of Yahweh,

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[1] Sermon VII., p. 130.

[2] Heb. i. 1–14 ; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 243 *seq.*

the God of Israel of the Second Isaiah; and that St. John the Baptist was the herald of that advent, even though St. John the Baptist himself could not reconcile the actual appearance of Jesus with the message which God had called and inspired him to give.

The situation is entirely similar with the Gospel of St. Matthew. Writing after the divinity of Jesus Christ had been firmly established in the East as well as in the West, he can hardly be interpreted in any other way than St. Mark and St. Luke. We may bring in here, from the Book of Revelation, prophecy which was certainly written in the East, a little later, it is true, than our Gospel of St. Matthew, but not very distant in time from it. One of these prophets clearly identifies Jesus Christ with Yahweh of the Second Isaiah, when he puts into the mouth of Jesus himself these words:

"Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me,
To render to each man according as his work is.
I am the Alpha and the Omega,
The first and the last, the beginning and the end."[1]

These are the very words which in the Second Isaiah[2] are used of Yahweh, and of Yahweh alone.[3]

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[1] Rev. xxii. 12, 13.

[2] Isa. xlviii. 12.

[3] Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 388 *seq.*

We may, therefore, say with confidence that the three Synoptic Evangelists agree in thinking of Jesus Christ as the Yahweh of the Old Testament, and that his advent, as heralded by St. John the Baptist, was the divine advent of the Second Isaiah, as well as the human advent of the Servant of Yahweh; in other words, that they saw in Jesus Christ, the Messiah of history, the coincidence of the line of the divine redeemer with the line of the human Messiah; that they saw all the Messianic ideals combine in him; that the historical Christ had himself in his life and work before the very eyes of the apostolic Church taken into his own glorious hands the unfinished work of the Old Testament prophecy, and himself drawn the harmonizing lines, himself made the unifying touches, so that all might see that he who alone harmonized and unified so great a complexity of representations was the very same pre-existent God whose servants the prophets had each fulfilled his appointed task in the gradual preparation, through many centuries, of so great a masterpiece of redemption.

It is doubtful whether any one can adequately realize the significance of the tremendous change that took place in the understanding of the Messianic ideal between the death of St. John

the Baptist and the close of the first Christian century. The complexity of the Messianic ideal of the Old Testament was so great that it was not possible for even those nearest to the Master, and the best instructed, to learn it excepting by gradual appropriation. So far as we can judge from the history, it was not in the circle of the Twelve that the doctrine of the divinity of Christ first appeared. It seems that the task assigned to them was to harmonize the many complex ideals attached to the human Messiah. Their very familiarity with Jesus as man possibly made it difficult for them to identify him with God. But St. Paul knew not Jesus after the flesh. He knew him first in theophany, as the heavenly being who once lived and died on earth. Therefore it was easier for him, and we may say more natural for him, to think out the heavenly relations of the Messiah, and it seems to have been his task, therefore, to unfold the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ and his true divinity.

The combination of the two conceptions of the humanity and the divinity then became easy, when at Rome St. Peter and St. Paul united to establish the Christian Church on the true foundation of the God-man.

It is not surprising that the Christian Church

could not for some centuries construct a harmonizing and satisfying doctrine of the God-man. The human mind is so constituted, of such different temperaments, of such one-sidedness, that it is easy and natural for one to consider one side of a question, another a different side of the same question. Even when it was an established fact that the God-man united and harmonized in himself all the Messianic ideals of the Old Testament, it was still inevitable that each of these ideals would be emphasized by some scholars to the neglect of other no less important ideals. Yes, even after the Church had established the catholic doctrine of the person of Christ in the decrees of the ancient councils and in the catholic creeds, while there was unity in the catholic faith, there still continued to be one-sidedness and inadequate representation in the best of writers. That is still more the case in our day, when freedom of investigation of all problems is the watchword of scholarship. The complexity of these Messianic ideals is better appreciated than ever before. The exaggerations of the divinity of Christ on the one side, and of the humanity of Christ on the other, are more marked than ever.

Every one of the Messianic ideals passes through the fires of objective and subjective crit-

icism, and is either exaggerated or depreciated in accordance with the temperament and presuppositions of the scholars who study them. All this will doubtless result, in the providence of God, in a vastly higher and grander apprehension of the sublime unity in Jesus Christ of all these ideals, springing out of a more profound apprehension of their variety and complexity. The modern world has a vastly higher and broader knowledge of what humanity means than the ancient world. The modern ideal of God is vastly higher and more sublime than that of the apostolic times. Is Jesus the ideal man, comprehending in himself all the highest ideals of humanity in the modern sense? Is Jesus God, comprehending in himself the sublime ideals of God of modern times? Does he combine these ideals in the unity of his person? If it be more difficult for the modern mind to grasp such a unity, it is a vastly grander unity when it is once grasped.

But even from the ancient point of view, it was not easy to accept the incarnation as a fact; to assuredly believe and know that Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, became man in Jesus Christ. That the three synoptic evangelists all teach that doctrine so clearly in accordance with the

epistles and the Apocalypse, shows that it had become a common Christian doctrine long before the close of the first Christian century, before apostolic instruction had passed away from the earth. This doctrine, doubtless, involved more than the evangelists supposed. They give us two passages only of the Old Testament. But these are representative of many more. If Jesus, when he came to the baptism on the Jordan, was indeed coming as the Yahweh, whose advent of salvation and judgment was depicted in the Second Isaiah and Malachi, then it is equally true that he is the Yahweh of all the passages of Old Testament prophecy that depict such an advent. He is the Husband of Israel of Hosea, who after faithful discipline will unite Israel again to himself in everlasting bonds of love.[1] He is the faithful Husband of Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and the great Prophet of the Exile.[2] He is the Shepherd who seeks out and gathers his scattered flock, and restores them to their own land.[3] He is the Judge and the Saviour of Israel and mankind as depicted in the various representations

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[1] Hosea ii.–iii.; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 165 *seq.*

[2] Zeph. iii. 8–20; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 224 *seq.*, 242 *seq.*, 374 *seq.*

[3] Ezek. xxxiv. 11–31; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 272 *seq.*, 483.

of a host of prophets. He is the conquering King whose return to Zion in triumphal procession is described in many psalms and prophets, but perhaps in none so grandly as in that royal psalm which reflects the influence of the Second Isaiah.

"Sing to Yahweh a new song; for He hath done wonders;
With His right hand, and His holy arm, He hath gained Him victory.
He hath made known His salvation, in the eyes of the nations hath revealed His righteousness;
Hath remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

"Make a joyful noise to Yahweh, all the earth:
Break forth and sing for joy, and sing praises;
Sing praises unto Yahweh with the harp,
With the harp and the voice of melody,
With trumpets and sound of cornet;
Make a joyful noise before the King.
Let the sea roar, and its fulness;
The world, and they that dwell therein;
Let the streams clap their hands;
Let the mountains sing for joy together;
Before Yahweh, for He cometh to judge the earth:
He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity."[1]

[1] Ps. xcviii.; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 453 *seq.*

IX

THE WORD MADE FLESH

IX

THE WORD MADE FLESH

And the Word became flesh,
And tabernacled among us,
And we beheld his glory,
Glory as of an only begotten from a father,
Full of grace and faithfulness.[1]

JOHN i. 14.

IT is agreed that the Gospel of St. John was written not earlier than near the end of the first Christian century. It was much later in date than the Epistle to the Hebrews, and therefore represents a more matured conception of the person and work of Jesus Christ than any other writing in the New Testament. The Gospel has an introduction in verses 1–18 of the first chapter. This seems to be a Christian hymn of the incarnation. This hymn was probably sung in the churches of Asia towards the close of the century, for it has measured lines and strophical

[1] See Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 508 *seq.*, for a justification of this translation and this arrangement, and also for fuller exposition.

organization. It has as its essential theme the Logos, or Word of God, in his pre-existence and in his incarnation.

It uses a term for the pre-existent Son of God, different from any that have been used before. This term was used because it had become a technical one in the Jewish school at Alexandria, and because it was appropriate to explain, in a more philosophical way, the relation of the Son of God to the Father. The Old Testament tells us of a number of theophanies by which God manifested Himself at the great crises of the history of redemption. These theophanic manifestations were identified with the pre-existent Son of God by St. Paul.[1] Furthermore, in the Book of Proverbs,[2] the Hebrew sages conceived of God as creating and governing the world by means of Wisdom, his daughter. In Ecclesiasticus or Wisdom of Ben Sirach,[3] Wisdom is represented as coming forth from the mouth of God and taking up her abode in the pillar of cloud and in the tabernacle and temple, and is thus identified with the Angel of the presence and the Glory of God in the Holy of Holies. In the Wisdom of Solomon,[4] Wisdom is represented as the breath

[1] Sermon IV., p. 85.
[2] Prov. viii.
[3] Eccles. xxiv. 3–11.
[4] Wisdom vii. 25–27.

of the power of God, the effulgence of His glory, in all ages inspiring holy prophets, pervading and influencing all things. Accordingly, the Epistle to the Colossians conceives of the Son of God as the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, the mediator of the creation and government of the world ;[1] and the Epistle to the Hebrews describes the Son of God as the effulgence of His glory, the very image of His substance.[2] Thus the Son of God is identified with the Wisdom of God, as well as the theophanies of God.

But the prologue of St. John's Gospel goes further, and that in the line of thought of the Jewish philosopher Philo. Philo made a distinction between the Logos, the Word of God, as subjective, in the divine mind itself, and the Word as objective, in the universe. The objective Logos is God, so far as He reveals Himself. All the theophanic manifestations in the Old Testament, as well as all the communications between God and the universe, are through the Word of God, who sums up in himself all of God that is revealed or made known to the creature.

From another point of view, the Jewish scholars

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[1] Col. i. 15–17. [2] Heb. i. 3.

of Palestine sought in every way to avoid the anthropomorphisms of the early history, that is, those statements which conceive of God after human ways, with human parts and passions. Accordingly, when there is no mention of theophanies in communications of God to man, they interposed the Word of God, in order that God Himself might always remain alone and apart from the creature, that all relations of God to man might be through a mediator.

Thus, both in Alexandrian Judaism and in Palestinian Judaism, it had been found necessary, in theological speculations, to distinguish between God as transcendent — that is, as above and apart from the creature, invisible, unapproachable, unknowable — and God as immanent, that is, as within the world and in communication with the creature. And so the author of the Christian hymn to the Logos introduces into the New Testament, and into Christian theology, this speculative, philosophic way of thinking about the relation of the Son of God to the Father.

It is no disparagement to Christianity, as some people think, that it uses the best thoughts that have come to men outside the sphere of divine revelation. It is rather an evidence of a sublime confidence in truth and fact. The best Christian

scholars from St. John's time onward have not hesitated to recognize and use, in constructing Christian theology and Christian institutions, all that is good and true and noble in the religions and philosophies formed outside the ranges of divine revelation. They did this, because they recognized that the divine Word is the light of the world, and that he shines in some measure in all ages and in all lands, struggling with the darkness everywhere, and imparting gleams of light even in the darkest minds. We ought, therefore, to expect to find the light of truth in such a profound thinker as the Jewish philosopher Philo, and in the Greek philosopher Socrates.

This first introduction of philosophy into Christian theology by the author of this early Christian hymn was only the first wave of a flood of thought which gave Christian theology its philosophical form for all time. The Greek mind had been trained by the divine Word to make this contribution to Christian theology.

Thus the author of our text makes the distinction between God in Himself and God as He manifests Himself in creation and providence. He identifies the Son of God with the objective Word of God, with the immanent God, with all the manifestations and relations of God to the

creature. Accordingly, the Son of God, as the Word of God, was in the beginning prior to all creatures as their creator.

> "All things were made by him;
> And without him was not anything made.
> That which hath been made was life in him."[1]

He was with God in the beginning and from the beginning throughout all time. He was distinct from the Father as the Son of the Father; but this distinction was in the same being or substance, and not in a different being or substance. He was God, — not another God from the Father, but one and the same God as the Father. The Son was begotten from everlasting of the Father, within the divine substance, and not without the divine substance. From the beginning, God was manifesting Himself in the creation of world upon world, solar system after solar system, throughout all the immensities of the universe, and all those manifestations, everywhere and at every time, were in the Word of God. From the beginning of human history God was revealing Himself to mankind and training him in redemption, — and all that rev-

[1] John i. 3; Messiah of the Apostles, p. 501 *seq.*

elation was in the Word of God. All the real guidance that men have had in any form of religion whatever, even the lowest types, has been through the Word of God. All the help that has come through the reason and the conscience of men, in any part of the world or in any age of its history, has come from the Word of God. All the course of nature, all the movements of history, have been guided and directed and controlled by the Word of God, immanent, all-pervading, and controlling all things. And so the hymn of the Logos sings:

> "And the life was the light of men,
> And the light shineth in the darkness,
> And the darkness apprehended it not."[1]

As he was the creator of all things, so he was the fountain of life to all living creatures. They lived in him and through him. From everlasting he was quickening the world and mankind with life, and ever imparting it more abundantly. And so he was the light of the world, lighting up the conscience and the reason, training mankind in their intellectual, religious, and moral development, ever upward and onward. Though the world knew him not, he continued imparting

[1] John i. 4, 5.

his life and his light. Though they apprehended him not, he continued shining, preparing the way as the stars prepare the way for the day-dawn. The poet conceives of all this hidden, secret working of the immanent God, the Word of God, in the world of man, as a great preparation for the incarnation. The Word was ever speaking through holy men and prophets; the life was ever imparting itself; the light was ever shining in the world before the advent of Christ; and notwithstanding the darkness, the deadness, and ignorance of the mass of mankind, they were yet in training for the day of redemption, the coming out of the Immanent Word of God from behind the veil of nature into full view in human flesh.

1. The Word of God became flesh. We have seen in the Epistle to the Philippians that the Son of God emptied himself of the form of God, and took to himself the form, likeness, and fashion of man.[1] In St. John's Gospel, it is more than the taking of the form, it is the taking of the substance of man; it is more than the taking of the substance, it is becoming flesh.

In the pastorals, the Son of God made an

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[1] Sermon V., p. 108.

epiphany or manifestation of himself in the flesh.[1] Here it is more than a manifestation, it is the becoming flesh, so as to be, and continue to be, flesh. The Epistle to the Hebrews represents that the Son of God partook of flesh and blood, shared it with his brethren, and was made like unto them in all points of trial and suffering.[2] Here the expression is somewhat stronger. He had been in his pre-existence God ; in his incarnation he became flesh. As he had from all eternity been truly God, so he became at the incarnation as truly man, and so ever continues from thenceforth to be both God and man. He did not cease to be God when he became man. He did not transform himself from being God into being man. But, retaining his divine nature in its entirety, he became also man, and so added to himself human nature in its entirety.

The Word of God became flesh ; that is, the Word as the Son of the Father became flesh. The Father did not become flesh. The Divine Spirit did not become flesh. But the Son of God, the Word, he and he alone of the three persons of the Trinity, became flesh. The term person, when used of the three persons of the Holy

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[1] Sermon VII., p. 133. [2] Sermon VIII., p. 151.

Trinity, has not the same meaning as when used of different men. The second person of the Trinity is not a different being from the Father and the Spirit, as one human being is different from another. He is of one being with the Father and the Spirit. He is not a separate and distinct person from the Father and the Spirit, as James is a different person from Peter and John. The distinctions within the Godhead are personal distinctions in a technical, theological sense. It is a theological problem which has not yet been solved: what are the constituent elements of the tri-personality of the Godhead. The Church has been concerned in her statements to ward off dangerous errors, not to make distinctions further than has been found necessary. The Holy Scriptures do not determine all questions for us. The Church has not yet, by logical deduction from the teachings of Holy Scripture, reached a solution of all questions. But so much is evident. There is a self-distinction between the Son and the Father. For so much is involved in the statement: The Word was with God. And there is no distinction of natures, for so much is involved in the statement: The Word was God.

Whatever is essential to the Godhead of the

Trinity, the three share in common. Whatever is essential to their self-distinctions and to their distinctive offices, they do not share. Whatever was common to the Godhead, the Son of God possessed in his divine nature; but whatever was special to himself, whatever belonged to his personal distinction as the Word of God, — that was the unity in which the human nature and the divine nature centred in the incarnation. This personal self-distinction of the Word of God as Son of the Father did not, however, constitute complete personality. Complete personality of the Godhead, in the human sense, was in the unity of the divine nature. There is only one divine Person in this sense. Therefore it was necessary that the Son of God should take up into himself all those elements of personality which are necessary to the integrity of an individual, as a distinct and separate being, which he did not have as the Son of God, and which, therefore, he must have as a son of man. Accordingly we are compelled to think of a divine-human personality for the God-man, that is, of certain elements of human personality in which the human nature was centred, as in organic union with the central divine personal distinction of the Word of God. Thus in the incarnation, the Son

of God, in the unity of his personal distinction as the Son of the Father, combines two natures, a human and divine, each nature separate, distinct, entire, and complete in itself.

2. The Word dwelt among us. There can be little doubt that the author had in mind the Shekinah of the temple of the old dispensation. Biblical history tells us that after the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness, the glory of God descended with the pillar of cloud and took possession of the Holy of Holies, and abode there upon the cherubic throne. So in the temple, the God of Israel was enthroned in theophanic glory in the Holy of Holies on the outstretched wings of the cherubim. The tabernacle and the temple, its historic successor, continued, until the destruction of Jerusalem at the Babylonian exile, to be the dwelling-place of God enthroned upon the cherubim. Just as the temple was the abiding presence of the theophanic God in the old dispensation, just so the Word of God tabernacled in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth. The Word of God had the same relation to the flesh of Jesus as the Shekinah had to the temple. Inasmuch as the author of the hymn identifies the word of God with the Shekinah and all the theophanies and manifestations of God, it is evident

that his thought is that in the Old Testament the Word of God dwelt for centuries in the temple, in the incarnation the same Word of God dwelt in the flesh of Jesus. In other words, the flesh of Jesus is the temple of the new dispensation. This conception is not peculiar to this passage, but is given elsewhere in the Johannine writings, as, for example, in citing the words of Jesus, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The evangelist says: "He spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he spake this; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."[1]

We have then, in this thought, a clear indication of the poet's conception of the incarnation. The dwelling of the Word of God in the temple of Jerusalem was temporary and preparatory for his final dwelling in human flesh, that he might ever after be the temple, the sacred place of worship for all mankind. The Shekinah was the most permanent and enduring of all theophanies, and yet it still remained within the range of theophanic manifestations. It was, however, con-

[1] John ii. 18–22.

fined to the Holy of Holies, and witnessed only by the high-priest, according to the ritual of the day of atonement, once in the year, when he presented the atoning blood, enveloping himself in a cloud of incense.

The glory of God from the temple was revealed to Isaiah, enthroned above the seraphim,[1] and to Ezekiel,[2] enthroned on the cherubic chariot. Subsequent to the destruction of the temple by the king of Babylon, it disappeared from the literature, except in poetic conceptions of a future advent. Indeed, the manifestation to Ezekiel was a manifestation of the glory as it was departing from the temple.

All that was glorious in the conception of the Shekinah and the temple of the old dispensation, became still more glorious in Jesus Christ; only that glory was veiled and hidden in his flesh, as the Shekinah had been hidden in the innermost throne room of the temple. But this veiling of the glory of the Word was only a temporary veiling, during his earthly life; when the veil of the temple of Jerusalem was rent by an earthquake, the veil of the flesh of the Son of God was also rent, and when his body arose from the

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[1] Isa. vi. [2] Ezek. i.–iii.

tomb, the body of the risen Lord no longer veiled the glory, but transmitted it in Christophanies to his disciples.

The tabernacling in the flesh of the Word of God was to be a permanent, final dwelling for which all the theophanies prepared. We have to go back to the comprehensive doctrine of the pre-existent Logos, and see that all the manifestations of God to the creature, in all times, everywhere, and in every way are through the Word of God. He was the Light and the Life and the Word of God to the creature. All of the manifestations of Light and of Life and of Word prior to the incarnation were preparatory to the incarnation — the incarnation was the culmination of them all. Accordingly, we have to see in the dwelling of the Son of God in the flesh, the permanent, final dwelling of the Light and Life, as well as the Word of God, in the flesh, and so Jesus Christ's flesh became the everlasting source of life, light, and wisdom to mankind. In and through his flesh, mankind enter into the heavenly life and the presence of the Godhead, and worship in the unveiled temple. Although the term used in this line of our poem might favor the conception of a permanent theophany after the mode of conception of the pastorals, yet the fact that it is

permanent and ultimate and everlasting leads us to think of something more than a manifestation. And then the previous line, as we have seen, indicates not merely a manifestation in the flesh, but a becoming flesh. Accordingly we have to think of the flesh of the man Christ Jesus, as the real flesh of the Son of God, as in organic and vital union with the Word of God, and of the glory as gradually pervading it and filling it.

3. The glory of the Word was beheld. The poet tells us:

> "We beheld his glory,
> Glory as of an only begotten from a Father,
> Full of grace and faithfulness."

The conception that the Word of God dwelt in human flesh as the glory of God in the temple, leads to the thought of the manifestation of that glory. Here, as in other passages we have studied, it is necessary for us to think of the incarnation as a gradual one, extending over the entire earthly career of Jesus. We have seen, in our study of the pastorals, that there is no real inconsistency between a self-emptying of the form of God and a manifestation in the flesh of grace, salvation, and incorruptible life.[1] But

[1] See p. 131.

here we have a beholding of the glory of the Word in the flesh. Certainly there was no such manifestation of glory in the period from the birth of Christ until his resurrection, except in the single instance of the transfiguration. Then glory shone forth from the flesh of Christ himself. But the privilege of seeing that glory was limited to the innermost circle of the Twelve. The transfiguration was indeed a Christophany. The terms suggest that the glory they saw was the glory from the Word of God shining through the flesh. Therefore, when the poet tells us, " We beheld his glory," we are to think of the many Christophanies of the resurrection as the manifestations of the glory of the Son.

The poet in the context has in mind not only the antithesis between the temple and the flesh of Christ, but also between Moses and Christ. Thinking of Moses, he recalls that the Law was given through Moses, and that there was a halo of glory on the face of Moses, reflecting the glory of the divine presence to which he had been admitted.[1] But the theophany through

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[1] Ex. xxxiv. 29–35 ; 2 Cor. iii. 13–18 ; Messiah of the Apostles, pp. 127 *seq.*

Jesus Christ was a Christophany, and that not of Law but of grace and faithfulness. The word translated "truth" in our version should more properly be translated "faithfulness" in accordance with the usage of terms in Holy Scripture. The thought then is that the gracious love of God and His faithfulness to His covenant were gloriously manifested in the Christophanies of Jesus Christ. The love of God reached its supreme exhibition in the self-sacrificing death of the cross, and the faithfulness of God gained its supreme recognition in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and so henceforth, throughout all time, the God-man became the full exhibition, pledge, guarantee, and assurance of the love of God and His faithfulness in the full salvation of mankind.

> "No man hath seen God at any time;
> The only begotten God,
> Who went to be in the bosom of the Father,
> He hath declared him."[1]

4. The Word became flesh and identified himself with the race of man. There can be no doubt that the Gospel of St. John takes a comprehensive view of the incarnation. The distinc-

[1] John i. 18; Messiah of the Apostles, p. 509.

tion between Jew and Gentile has passed out of mind. The Logos is the light and life of mankind. So the Gospel tells us, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." "For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him."[1] It is impossible to limit the world here to the elect, or even those who may be eventually saved. It is necessary to suppose that there is a sense in which the Son of God became, by his incarnation, the Redeemer of the world.

In his incarnation he did not identify himself with a part of the human race, or with elect members of the race, but with the human race as such. When he became man, he became organically and vitally one of the human race. He identified himself with humanity to redeem humanity. He entered into the world and became a part of the world in order to save the world. As the immanent God, he had always been in the world and in all creatures, by his omnipotent energy of life and light. He had occasionally clothed himself in physical forms in order to manifest himself in theophanies to

[1] John iii. 16, 17.

the human senses. Now by the incarnation he became flesh, and the physical universe was taken into organic and vital union with him in his human nature. He was ever intensely interested in humanity, and in the world as creator and governor, as the mediator between the transcendent God and the creature; now he is identified with humanity, as himself creature and a part of creation. He is part of the organization of nature and within the organism of humanity. He so identifies himself with the world and man, that he himself risks his destiny with the destinies of the earth and man. The salvation of the world, therefore, not only depends on the goodwill of the creator, in the wise government of the universe; but still more since the incarnation upon the ability of the God-man to save the organism of which he has become an essential part. By the incarnation he became the guarantee and pledge of the ultimate redemption of the world. Having accomplished his earthly work as Redeemer, he is enthroned as Lord of all, having himself achieved full redemption and conquered all evil; and this makes it certain that eventually the race will be redeemed and the world glorified in him.

The incarnation, from this point of view, is

the guarantee of the salvation of mankind, and is the great essential step in that salvation upon which all others depend. And so to the Johannine writings it is the cardinal doctrine. "Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God."[1] The incarnation of the Son of God as the responsible head of the race does not imply that every one will be saved, because faith in the Son of God and holy love are essential to final salvation in every individual of the sons of men; but it does mean that no human being can be lost simply because he is a human being, a child of Adam, inheriting a depraved nature. The incarnation overcomes all the faults of original sin and human frailty. No man need be lost because of the failures and faults and sins of human life, for the incarnation opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness in the rich, pure blood of the incarnate God.

He and he only will be ultimately lost, who deliberately separates himself from redeemed humanity, by rejecting the incarnate Saviour, and refusing the light and the life with which the God-man fills the Church and the world.

[1] 1 John iv. 2, 3.

X

BORN OF THE VIRGIN

X

BORN OF THE VIRGIN

The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee,
And the power of the most High shall overshadow thee ;
Wherefore also that holy thing that is to be born,
Shall be called the Son of God.

LUKE i. *35.*

THE Gospel of St. Luke was written at a much earlier date than the Gospel of St. John, not far from the date of the Epistle to the Hebrews. This Gospel, in its preface, recognizes the use of written sources of an earlier date. Among these we may easily determine the primitive Gospel of St. Mark, and the original Gospel of St. Matthew in the Hebrew language, known as the Logia, or Sayings of Jesus. Besides these, St. Luke evidently used other documents for his story of the birth and infancy of Jesus. The main stock of the story is comprised in a series of Christian poems, many of which have been used from the earliest times, as the Canticles of the Christian Church : such as the Ave Maria, the Magnificat, the Benedictus, the Nunc Dimit-

tis.[1] These were originally composed in the Hebrew language, with measured lines and strophical organization, and were, in all probability, among the earliest, if not the earliest Christian hymns. They were sung in Jewish Christian congregations before the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore belong in the earliest group of Christian documents, the primary written sources of Christianity.[2] We have seen that the doctrine of the incarnation as the divine Word becoming flesh was first sung in a hymn in the Greek congregations of Asia.[3] The doctrine of the incarnation as a virgin birth is in a hymn of the Jewish congregations of Palestine, at least twenty years earlier.

We have taken this statement of the incarnation out of its chronological order, for this reason. The statements as to the incarnation, thus far considered, subsequent to the teaching of Jesus himself, all belong to the teachings of St. Paul and his successors in the Greek world, and they have been in the same line of development. The incarnation as a virgin birth belongs to a different line of thought, which was entirely apart

[1] See Messiah of the Gospel, pp. 43 *seq.*

[2] Messiah of the Gospels, pp. 42 *seq.*

[3] Sermon IX., p. 191.

from the other line, namely, the Jewish-Christian line in Palestine. There is no manner of connection between the two. There is nothing whatever in any of the views of the incarnation thus far considered which suggests the virgin birth. All that we have thus far learned of the incarnation, from the teaching of Jesus, and the writings of St. Paul, St. John, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, would stand firm if there had been no virgin birth ; if Jesus had been born of Joseph and Mary, having father and mother, as any other child. Therefore the virgin birth is only one of many statements of the mode of the incarnation. It has no more documentary value, no more intrinsic importance, than any other of the many we have thus far studied. The doctrine of the incarnation does not depend upon the virgin birth. Since all the other passages relating to the incarnation, except that of the Gospel of the Infancy, know nothing of the virgin birth, it is only a minor matter connected with the incarnation, and should have a subordinate place in the doctrine. That which is unknown to the teachings of St. Peter and St. Paul, St. John and St. James and our Lord himself, and is absent from the earliest and latest Gospels, cannot be so essential as many people have supposed.

At the same time the virgin birth is a New Testament doctrine, and we must give it its proper place and importance in connection with the others.

As has been said, this doctrine is in the Ave Maria, or Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin. This annunciation is in the form of a poem. It was written by an early Christian poet. It was certainly composed in the Jewish-Christian community in Palestine, which was nearest to the Virgin Mary. The author must, therefore, have known the mind of the Jerusalem or Galilean community as to the Mother of Christ Jesus. This hymn belongs so near the life of our Lord, and so near the immediate family of Jesus, that its reliability ought not to be questioned. The Jerusalem church under the headship of St. James, the brother of the Lord, would not have tolerated the Ave Maria, if it had not expressed their devotional feelings towards our Lord and his Mother.

Although the Ave Maria is not cited in the Gospel of St. Matthew it seems to be presupposed; for the narrative gives in prose the same idea of the incarnation which is given in the Ave Maria as poetry.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this

wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins. Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,

> "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son,
> And they shall call his name Immanuel;[1]

which is, being interpreted, God with us. And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth a son: and he called his name Jesus."[2]

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[1] Isa. vii. 13–17; Messianic Prophecy, pp. 195 *seq.*

[2] Matt. i. 18–25.

This passage in St. Matthew represents that the virgin birth was in fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah. The original passage does not predict the virgin birth of the Messiah; the original Hebrew word only means a young woman whether married or single. But St. Matthew quotes the Greek version of the Old Testament, which uses a more specific term, which is translated virgin.

The virgin birth, however, is not the point of the prophecy, and it is by no means certain that St. Matthew cites the prediction on that account. The prophecy is cited as a prediction of the birth of the child Immanuel, which is translated "God with us." This justifies the name Jesus, which, in translation, means "Yahweh is salvation." But the prose narrative makes it very plain that while Mary was the mother of Jesus, Joseph was not his father, according to the flesh. Joseph followed the command of the angel, and adopted the child as his own, recognizing in him a child of Mary, conceived and born of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, and in the earliest writings of the New Testament, is the energy or power of God. The conception of Jesus resulted from the putting forth of the vital and reative energy of the divine Spirit. This is

the prosaic view of it which is given in the Gospel of St. Matthew. But the hymn in the Gospel of St. Luke gives it in a more poetic form.

The poet sees a theophany. As in ancient times the pillar of cloud which guided Israel in his exodus from Egypt into the Holy Land, descended and enveloped the tabernacle with glory, and entered in and took possession of the throne room, the holiest of all; so God descended in a cloud of glory upon the Virgin Mary, overshadowed her, and the power of the divine Spirit took possession of her, and enabled her by his quickening energy to conceive the child Jesus, and bear him into the world. Thus the earthly origin of Jesus began in a theophany, just as the angel choir appeared at his birth in theophany, the theophanic star led the sages to his cradle, and the theophany of the voice and the dove at his baptism consecrated him for his public ministry. We have seen already, in several texts, that the theophany was the mould in which the doctrine of the incarnation was formed in the Christian Church. We have seen that St. Paul in the Epistle to the Corinthians regarded the ancient theophanies as manifestations of the pre-existing Christ;[1] that the pastorals view the entire first

[1] Sermon IV., p. 85.

advent as essentially an epiphany or theophanic manifestation of the pre-existent Christ,[1] and that the Hymn to the Logos[2] represents the divine Word as dwelling in the flesh of Jesus Christ, as the Glory of God in the ancient tabernacle and temple. It was quite natural, therefore, that the author of the Ave Maria should think of the conception of Christ as a theophanic coming of God, with the vital power of the divine Spirit, and of his taking possession of Mary as the temple of the Son of God.

One of the evidences of the early date of this doctrine, and of the hymn which enshrines it, is that it sings of the virgin birth of the Son of God, and seems to know nothing at all of his pre-existence. There is nothing in the hymn to suggest even ideal pre-existence. From this point of view, this doctrine of the incarnation is more primitive than that of the Epistle to the Galatians. Indeed, if there were any, even the slightest, trace of the doctrine of the virgin birth in the Epistle to the Galatians, or in any other of the epistles, we might have made the virgin birth of our Lord the first in the series of our discourses. But, in fact, while it is a more primitive idea, so

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[1] Sermon VII., p. 130. [2] Sermon IX., p. 202.

far as the pre-existence of Christ is concerned, and also so far as the theophanic phase of the incarnation is concerned, there is yet in the virgin birth a doctrine of the incarnation which must have been sufficiently late in the Palestinian community not to have influenced in any way the writers of the epistles; that is, subsequent to the final departure of St. Peter and St. Paul, and possibly also of St. John, from Jerusalem.

It would have been so natural for the author of this poem to have brought in the pre-existence here, if it had been at all in his mind. As the author of the Hymn to the Logos thought of the divine Word tabernacling in human flesh, so the author of the Ave Maria might have thought of the Son of God as coming in theophany, and making the Virgin Mary his earthly temple, just as in a primitive creed given by Tertullian,[1] which says that the Word of God was sent from the Father into the Virgin, and was born of her. But the Son of God is entirely passive here; he is simply the holy thing that was conceived. The Spirit of God is the divine theophanic agent. In view of all the facts of the case, it is noteworthy

[1] Tertullian Adv. Praxeam, Cap. 2.

that the doctrine of the incarnation which has been enshrined in the creeds is that of the Ave Maria and not that of the epistles. In the Apostles' Creed we say:

> "Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost,
> Born of the Virgin Mary."

This is based entirely upon the Ave Maria. In the Nicene Creed we say:

"Came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man."

This is a combination of the Hymn of the Logos and the Hymn of the Virgin. But the primitive form of the creed was, "Descended, was made flesh, and was made man," which is altogether in accordance with the hymn to the Logos.

The favorite idea of the incarnation among the people has ever been the simpler one of the virgin birth, as in the Ave Maria. The theologians have ever preferred the more profound doctrine of the Hymn of the Logos.

No difficulty was found with the doctrine of the virgin birth until recent times, when the

advanced knowledge of natural law made it difficult to believe that God would violate law in miracle-working of any kind. The scientific objection to miracles has been avoided by calling attention to the higher laws of the universe and the latent powers of nature which were unknown to the ancients, but which are gradually being discovered in modern times. It does not destroy the essential character of the miracles of the Bible, if we suppose that the prophets were guided by the divine Spirit to use the occult powers of nature and the higher laws of the universe, unknown to the men of their age. There is no sufficient reason for us to reject the virgin birth, because we may not be able to explain it in accordance with our present knowledge.

We make a decided advance towards the removal of difficulties if we follow the poet's idea, that the conception of Jesus was theophanic in character; that is, that God was present with almighty power when the Virgin Mary conceived Jesus. For we have to consider, not the conception of an ordinary man, but the conception of the Second Adam, the Saviour of the world. There was a special need, therefore, for divine activity. As the ancient Jewish poet thought of

the divine Spirit as hovering over primitive chaos with creative energy to bring light, life, and order out of it;[1] as another Jewish poet saw God Himself present in theophany, moulding the body of man out of the clay soil, and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life,[2] — so an early Christian poet conceived of the divine Spirit as overshadowing the Virgin Mary, and imparting His divine power to enable her to conceive the man Jesus.

If with Tertullian we attach the virgin birth to the pre-existent Logos, then we may start with the doctrine of the divine immanence. The Son of God as the immanent God is always in any and every place. He may manifest himself anywhere. He might, therefore, without the violation of any law of nature or any disturbance of metaphysical relations, manifest himself in the primary germ of human life.

A scholastic divine of the middle ages represents that there are only four ways in which it is possible to think of the origin of man: (1) of man without father or mother — Adam; (2) of man with both father and mother — the common experience of men; (3) of man without a mother —

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[1] Gen. i. [2] Gen. ii.

Eve formed from man. The only other possible way was of man without a father. This last was reserved for the seed of the woman, the son of the Virgin. It was not necessary in order to complete humanity that Jesus should be born as other men, of father and mother. Eve was as human as Adam, though she had no mother; so Jesus was as human as Adam, though he had no father. Humanity was complete and entire in all these cases.

We have been compelled to consider the question whether Jesus shared in sinful flesh, whether he inherited in his flesh the hereditary taint and defilement of original sin, with its tendency to evil. In our study of the Epistle to the Hebrews we have seen that though Jesus partook of flesh and blood, we were not obliged to think that he partook of any hereditary sin or corruption.[1] When now we consider, not only that Jesus became flesh, but that he was born into this world, of a human mother, we have all the more to consider how he could have been conceived and born without sharing, with all others of the human kind, in original sin and hereditary inclinations to sin.

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[1] See p. 159.

This problem was not in the mind of the author of this hymn, any more than it was in the mind of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The problem arises only when we think of it, in view of the Pauline doctrine of original sin, as connected with the first Adam. St. Paul, who taught this doctrine of original sin, did not think of the incarnation as a virgin birth or as a becoming flesh. The writers, who think of the incarnation in these closer relations to humanity, know nothing of original sin.

Nevertheless in Christian theology we are forced to consider the problem. It was not considered by the ancient Greek Church, which defined the doctrine of the Person of Christ in the Creeds and at the Great Councils ; they had not yet been called to study the doctrine of original sin. But when the Latin Church followed the lead of Augustine, in his doctrine of the original sin of mankind, the problem emerged how to explain the human nature of Jesus Christ as virgin born, under these circumstances. Accordingly, the theologians sought out many explanations. They saw that in some way it was necessary to remove the taint of original sin from the human nature which the Son of God assumed when he became man. There must have been such a sanc-

tification of that flesh, at the time of the incarnation, or prior to it, that Jesus Christ might be conceived without sin. The older theologians thought of a sanctification of the mother before the birth of the Son. But it was difficult to see how the sanctification of the mother could remove inherited depravity. Accordingly, the sanctification was pushed further back, and the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin was devised, which, in recent times, has been defined as an infallible doctrine of the Church of Rome.

Protestant theologians, who were unwilling to recognize such a sanctification of the mother, sought the sanctification of the flesh which the Son of God assumed, either immediately prior to its assumption by the Son of God, or else in the very act of assumption itself, through the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. The objection to these opinions of Protestant scholastics is that it involves the removal of the hereditary taint of original sin by a momentary act of the divine Spirit in the flesh which Jesus assumed. Such an act is purely mechanical, and has nothing ethical in it; and if such a thing was done for the child Jesus, why does not the Holy Spirit sanctify every man child when he is conceived,

and not wait for the sacrament of baptism, or for his personal faith in Christ?

Another opinion of some recent divines is that the transmitted sin goes with the person, and not with the nature, and inasmuch as the person of the God-man was not derived from the human nature, the taint was not communicated. But this view does not suit the real situation; for although essentially the person is the person of the Word of God, yet, in fact, important elements of human personality were taken up into the personality of the Son of God, to make up the individuality of the theanthropic person,[1] and these carry with them inherited characteristics; otherwise the most essential thing in human nature, namely, moral nature, was not in the human nature which was assumed by the Son of God, and the humanity was so far incomplete and defective.

It is possible to take a position somewhat intermediate between the Roman Catholic doctrine and that medley of opinions which Protestantism has produced but not yet officially defined.

Holding the Augustinian doctrine of original

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[1] See p. 201.

sin, and the theory of the transmission of intellectual and moral faculties and characteristics as well as physical substance, we must recognize that the good character is transmitted as well as the evil; that if, on the one hand, God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Him, He yet shows mercy unto thousands of generations of them that love Him and keep His commandments.[1] We have to consider that Israel was the chosen nation, the banner bearer of redemption for mankind, and that the seed of the promise was being prepared by a process of sanctification through the centuries for the time when the Messiah should be born of it. We also have to remember that the seed of David was the Messianic seed, that God had promised that His favor should never depart from it, and that though He would discipline the seed His sure mercies should abide with it.[2] The seed of David was transmitted in a succession of heroes of faith and piety such as was unique in the world's history. It was the holy seed of promise. The same is true of the priestly line of succession. Though the seed of promise was in obscurity for many

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[1] Ex. xx. 5, 6. [2] Messianic Prophecy, pp. 126 *seq.*

generations, when it appears in history, it all the more surely, after such a quiet preparation, appears in Joseph and in Mary, in persons of extraordinary purity, simplicity, and devotion. May we not suppose that the Holy Spirit had been sanctifying the holy line for generations, preparing it for that fulness of time when the Messiah was to be born of it, and that in Mary the Mother of our Lord that sanctifying had reached the supreme point of entire removal from her, even at her birth, of all the taint and defilement of original sin, so that she was fitted from her birth by her purity, innocence, and consecrated sanctity to be the Mother of our Lord. Such a view does no violence to the Pauline doctrine of original sin, but is in accord with the doctrine of a preparation for the advent, which we have seen to be involved in most of the texts dealing with the incarnation. The holy Mother, pure and undefiled, immaculate and altogether sacred, had been prepared through many generations of holy ancestry, as the consummate flower of humanity, to bear as her fruit the holy child. And so the archangel greets her at the annunciation:

> "Hail thou that art endued with grace:
> The Lord is with thee."[1]

[1] Luke i. 28.

Many in our times are so troubled by this doctrine of a miraculous birth of Jesus, as unnatural and in violation of the laws of nature, that they are blinded to the sublimity of the poet's idea. I have endeavored to show that it should be classed with theophanies, rather than with miracles, and explained as the coming forth of the immanent omnipresent Son of God into local and material forms. From this point of view, it is in some respects the most sublime of all the statements of the incarnation. It is often so, that the Christian poet sees farther and deeper than the prosaic theologian. If the Son of God was to become fully, completely, and altogether man, where was he to begin? If a human body was to be prepared for him, at what stage in the preparation of the body was he to assume it? Every possibility was thought out by Christian sects, in the earlier centuries; and all rejected by the Church, as leading to serious error, except the single one of the virgin birth. It was not sufficient that the Logos should assume the body of a full-grown man at the time of the baptism in the Jordan; it was not enough that he should assume the body of the boy Jesus when first he visited the temple and was found with the doctors of the law; it was not sufficient that he should

assume the body of the babe when the star guided the wise men to his cradle, or when the angelic choir appeared to the shepherds, or at the very moment of his birth, — it was necessary for the completion and perfection of the incarnation that he should begin with the very first beginnings of human nature.

It is sublime to think of the Son of God becoming man. Other religions think of the incarnation of their gods. It is still more sublime to think of him as a babe in the Virgin's arms. That thought has been the favorite one in Christian art. From the days of the mural paintings in the Catacombs until the present day, the Madonna and her babe have been the noblest theme of Christian art, and they have ever inspired its greatest masterpieces. But vastly more sublime is that doctrine which can only be represented by the poet's art, the Son of God beginning his earthly existence as a holy thing conceived by the Virgin. The Son of God would begin at the very beginning of human substance, and so live through the whole life of man until death and the abode of the dead, that he might consecrate every moment of human existence, and redeem all that belonged to human nature.

Therefore we believe, in the words of the holy Creed of the Catholic Church:

"In one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God;
Begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
Very God of very God;
Begotten, not made;
Being of one substance with the Father;
By whom all things were made:
Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man;
And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried:
And the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures;
And ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of the Father:
And he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead;
Whose kingdom shall have no end."

INDEXES

INDEX OF TEXTS

GENESIS. Page
i. 226
i. 26 90
ii. 226
ii. 7 91
iii. 5 109
xii. 1–4 72
xvi. 7 seq. 87
xxii. 11–15 87
xxviii. 10–22 87
xxxii. 24–31 87

EXODUS.
iv. 22 34
xiii. 20–22 86
xiv. 19–31 86
xvi. 86
xvii. 1–7 86
xx. 5, 6 231
xxiv. 3–8 22
xxxiv. 29–35 207
xl. 34–38 87

NUMBERS.
x. 34–36 86

DEUTERONOMY.
xviii. 16–19 22

II. SAMUEL.
vii. 11–16 35

I. CHRONICLES.
xvii. 10–14 35

JOB.
xxxviii. 7 90

PSALMS.
ii. 7 35
viii. 90
viii. 4–6 5
xcviii. 187
cx. 1 35

PROVERBS.
viii. 192

ISAIAH. Page
vi. 204
vii. 13-17 219
xxxv. 170
xl. 10–11 171
xlviii. 12 181
liii. 110

JEREMIAH.
i. 5 77

EZEKIEL.
i–iii. 87, 204
ii. 1 5
iii. 1 5
iv. 1 5
xxxiv. 11–31 186

DANIEL.
vii. 6
vii. 13 5
vii. 14 6
ix. 27 7
xi. 31 7
xii. 1 7

HOSEA.
ii.–iii. 186

ZEPHANIAH.
iii. 8-20 186

MALACHI.
iii. 1, 2 177

ECCLESIASTICUS.
xxiv. 3–11 192

WISDOM OF SOLOMON.
vii. 25–27 192

MATTHEW.
i. 18–25 219
ii. 1–12 ..... 129, 137
iii. 3 175

Page
iii. 17 36
iv. 1–11 36
v. 11 20
vii. 21 41
vii. 29 21
viii. 17 159
viii. 20 16
viii. 29 36
ix. 6 3
x. 23 12
x. 32 41
x. 33 ..... 9, 41
xi. 3 172
xi. 18, 19 17
xi. 27 33
xii. 8 17
xii. 31, 32 18
xii. 40 13
xii. 50 41
xiii. 37 12
xiii. 41 8
xiv. 33 36
xv. 13 40
xvi. 13–20 173
xvi. 16 36
xvi. 17 41
xvi. 20 28
xvi. 21 14
xvi. 27 39
xvi. 28 12
xvii. 1–8 36
xvii. 9, 12, 22, 23 14
xviii. 10 41
xviii. 11 19
xviii. 14, 19, 35 41
xix. 28 11
xx. 18–19 14
xx. 23 41
xx. 25–28 14
xxi. 23–27 28
xxiv. 30 7
xxiv. 36 ..... 39, 119
xxiv. 37–39 10
xxiv. 44 10
xxv. 31–33 10
xxvi. 2 14
xxvi. 24 15
xxvi. 26–29 22
xxvi. 29 41
xxvi. 39 41
xxvi. 45 14
xxvi. 51–53 116
xxvi. 53 41

Page

xxvi. 63 ... 36
xxvi. 64 ... 10
xxvii. 40, 43, 54 ... 36
xxviii. 18 ... 52
xxviii. 19 ... 41

MARK.

i. 1-4 ... 175
i. 7, 8 ... 171
i. 9-11 ... 137
i. 11 ... 36
i. 22 ... 21
ii. 10-11 ... 3
ii. 27-28 ... 17
iii. 11 ... 36
iii. 28-29 ... 18
iv. 26-29 ... 13
v. 7 ... 36
viii. 27-30 ... 115, 173
viii. 30 ... 28
viii. 31 ... 14
viii. 38 ... 9, 39
ix. 1 ... 12
ix. 2-8 ... 36
ix. 9, 12, 31 ... 14
ix. 29 ... 36
x. 33-34 ... 14
x. 42-45 ... 14
xi. 27-33 ... 28
xiii. 26 ... 7
xiii. 32 ... 39, 119
xiv. 21 ... 15
xiv. 22-25 ... 22
xiv. 36 ... 41
xiv. 41 ... 14
xiv. 47-49 ... 116
xiv. 61 ... 36
xiv. 61-63 ... 116
xiv. 62 ... 10
xiv. 65 ... 116
xv. 16-20 ... 116
xv. 39 ... 36

LUKE.

i. 15, 16 ... 77
i. 28 ... 232
i. 35 ... 215
ii. 8-20, 25-35 ... 137
ii. 49 ... 42
iii. 4-6 ... 175
iii. 22 ... 36
iv. 1-13 ... 36
iv. 32 ... 21
iv. 41 ... 36
v. 24 ... 3
vi. 5 ... 17
vi. 22 ... 20
vi. 35 ... 103
vii. 33-34 ... 17
viii. 28 ... 36
ix. 18-21 ... 173
ix. 20 ... 36
ix. 21 ... 28
ix. 22 ... 14
ix. 26 ... 9, 39

Page

ix. 27 ... 12
ix. 28-36 ... 36
ix. 44 ... 14
ix. 56 ... 19
ix. 58 ... 16
x. 13 ... 19
x. 22 ... 33
xi. 30 ... 13
xii. 9 ... 9
xii. 10 ... 18
xvii. 22 ... 20
xvii. 26-30 ... 10
xviii. 8 ... 11
xviii. 31-33 ... 14
xix. 9-10 ... 19
xx. 1-8 ... 28
xxi. 27 ... 7
xxii. 18-20 ... 22
xxii. 22 ... 15
xxii. 29 ... 40
xxii. 42 ... 41
xxii. 44 ... 152
xxii. 49-53 ... 116
xxii. 69 ... 10
xxii. 70 ... 36
xxiii. 34, 46 ... 41
xxiv. 7 ... 14
xxiv. 44 ... 22
xxiv. 49 ... 40

JOHN.

i. 1-18 ... 191
i. 3 ... 196
i. 4, 5 ... 197
i. 14 ... 191, 206
i. 18 ... 208
i. 19-23 ... 169
i. 19-28 ... 172
i. 29 ... 171
i. 34, 49 ... 36
i. 51 ... 4, 11
ii. 18-22 ... 203
iii. 13 ... 4, 26
iii. 14 ... 4, 15
iii. 16, 17 ... 209
iv. 46-53 ... 101
v. 17 ... 45
v. 19-27 ... 47
v. 21 ... 140
v. 24 ... 143
v. 25 ... 37
v. 26 ... 112
vi. 27 ... 23
vi. 30-31 ... 115
vi. 33-38, 42 ... 54
vi. 46 ... 49
vi. 51 ... 54
vi. 53 ... 23
vi. 62 ... 26
viii. 23 ... 54
viii. 28 ... 15
viii. 54-55 ... 49
viii. 56 ... 55, 72
viii. 57, 58 ... 55
x. 14-15 ... 49

Page

x. 17-18 ... 112
x. 18 ... 139
x. 36 ... 37
xi. 4 ... 37
xi. 27 ... 36
xii. 1-8 ... 101
xii. 23, 32, 34 ... 15
xiii. 31-32 ... 16
xiv. 6 ... 49
xiv. 9, 11 ... 56
xiv. 20 ... 57
xv. 18-20 ... 158
xvi. 12-14 ... 64
xvi. 28 ... 57
xvii. 1-2 ... 48
xvii. 5 ... 58
xvii. 19 ... 122
xvii. 21 ... 57
xvii. 24 ... 59
xvii. 25 ... 49
xviii. 10-11 ... 116
xix. 7 ... 36

ACTS.

i. 7 ... 40
iii. 22 ... 22
ix. 1-9 ... 67
xv. ... 99
xx. 35 ... 103
xxii. 5-11 ... 67
xxvi. 10-18 ... 67

ROMANS.

v. 17 ... 74, 109
vii. 14-18 ... 159
viii. 1, 2 ... 141
viii. 1-4 ... 74
viii. 3 ... 109
xi. 29 ... 71

I. CORINTHIANS.

viii. 5 ... 95
viii. 6 ... 78, 95
x. 1-4 ... 86
xi. 3 ... 78, 89, 109
xi. 7, 8, 9 ... 89
xi. 23-26 ... 22
xv. 24-26 ... 139
xv. 45 ... 109, 139
xv. 45-47 ... 78, 91
xv. 47 ... 109
xv. 53-54 ... 144

II. CORINTHIANS.

iii. 13-18 ... 207
viii. 9 ... 78, 83, 99

GALATIANS.

i. 17-19 ... 79
iii. 13 ... 68
iii. 16, 17 ... 71
iii. 24 ... 67
iii. 26-28 ... 73

Page
iii. 29 71
iv. 4–5 63

PHILIPPIANS.
ii. 5–8 107
iii. 4–14 67
iii. 20, 21 143

COLOSSIANS.
i. 12–22 ..... 149, 179
i. 15–17 193
i. 15–20 114
iii. 4 129

I. TIMOTHY.
i. 15 ..... 128, 136
iii. 16 ..... 128, 131
vi. 14 129

II. TIMOTHY.
Page
i. 8–10 127
i. 9 75
iv. 1 129

TITUS.
ii. 11, 12 135
ii. 13 129

HEBREWS.
i. 1–2 64
i. 1–14 ..... 149, 180
i. 3 193
ii. 14–15 140
ii. 14–17 147
ii. 18 156
iv. 15 ..... 122, 157, 161
v. 7–8 152
v. 8–9 122

Page
vii. 26, 27, 28 161
ix. 26 138

I. PETER.
i. 20 ..... 75, 129, 135
v. 4 129

II. PETER.
i. 16–18 36
i. 19 135

I. JOHN.
iii. 5, 8 129
iv. 2, 3 211

REVELATION.
i. 17–18 154
xxii. 12, 13 181

INDEX OF SUBJECTS

A

Adam, the second, 26, 73, 91 seq., 162 seq., 228 seq.
Advent of God, 169 seq.
Agony of Christ, 152 seq.
Angel of the Presence, 85 seq., 132 seq.
Angels, as capable of redemption, 148 seq.
Annunciation to the Virgin, 218 seq.
Apostles' Creed, 224.
Archetypal Man, 90.
Augustine, 228.
Authority of Son of Man, 21.
Ave Maria, 215 seq.

B

Born of a Woman, 63 seq.
Born of the Virgin, 215.

C

Charles, 25.
Christophany, 67.
Complexity of Messianic Idea, 172 seq., 183 seq.
Consciousness of Christ, 116 seq.
Consciousness of Sonship, 43 seq.

D

Death, abolition of, 139 seq.
Divinity of Christ, 179 seq., 196 seq.

E

Emptying himself, 108 seq.
Enoch, Similitudes of, 6, 25.
Epiphany of Christ, 127 seq.; in classic usage, 130; in ecclesiastical usage, 128 seq.; in New Testament usage, 129.
Epistle to the Galatians, date of, 66.

F

Father of Israel, 34; *of Mankind*, 38; *of Messianic dynasty*, 34; *of the Son*, 41 seq.
Flesh of Christ, 136 seq., 151 seq., 162 seq., 198 seq.
Forgiveness of Sins, 4.
Form of God, 110 seq.
Fulness of the Time, 69.

G

Gildersleeve, B. L., 40.
Glory of God, 206.
Grace of God, manifestation of, 134.
Growth of Christ, 116 seq.

H

Headship of Christ, 88 seq.
Herald of the Advent, 177 seq.
High priesthood of Christ, 155.
Hymn of Logos, 191; *of the Virgin*, 216 seq.

I

Image of God, 90.
Immaculate conception, 229 seq.
Immanence of God, 194.
Incorruption, 138 seq.

K

Kenosis, 107 seq.
Knowledge of Christ, limitations, 119 seq.

L

Law, birth under, 68.
Logia of St. Matthew, 33.
Logos, 192 seq.
Lord, as used of Christ, 96 seq.

M

Made like unto his brethren, 147 seq.
Man of heaven, 93.
Mediator, of Creation, 95 seq., 149 seq.; *of Providence*, 149.
Messianic King, 12, 28, 36 seq.
Mission from the Father, 76.

N

Nicene Creed, 224, 235.

O

Original Sin not in Christ, 160 seq., 228.

P

Paraclete, 64.
Perfected by sufferings, 156.
Personal distinction in Trinity, 200 seq.
Personality of Christ, 201.
Philo, 193.
Philosophy, Christian, 195.
Poverty, voluntary, 17, 85 seq.
Pre-existence, ideal, 55 seq., 92 seq.; *of Christ*, 23 seq., 49 seq., 90 seq., 223 seq.
Prophet like Moses, 22.

R

Race, Christ identifies himself with, 209 seq.; *redemption of*, 208.
Resurrection of Christ, 13 seq.
Reticence of Jesus, 27, 37.

S

Sanctification of Christ, 122 seq.
Saviour, of Christ, 136 seq.
Seed of Abraham, 70.
Self-impoverishment of the Lord, 83 seq.
Servant of Yahweh, 110.
Shekinah, 87, 204 seq.
Son of God, 34 seq.
Son of Man, 3 seq.
Son of the Father, 33 seq.
St. John the Baptist and Christ, 171 seq.
Sufferings of Christ, 152 seq.

T

Temptation of Christ, 156 seq.
Tertullian, 223.
Theophanies, 86 seq., 130 seq., 192, 202 seq., 221 seq.
Transcendence of God, 194.
Trinity, 200 seq.

V

Virgin, birth, 220 seq.; *immaculate*, 232.

W

Word made flesh, 191 seq.

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